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of silence with his straightforward announcement of fact.

He deals with every phase of the controversies which have clung to Wilson's public life, with challenging answers to the criticisms which were levelled against it. Friend and foe will agree that this book is a great revelation of perhaps the most fateful personality of the War. It is the book upon which will rest the world's future estimate of Woodrow Wilson.

The Great ADVENTURE at WASHINGTON

The Story of the Conference

by

MARK SULLIVAN

WITHDRAWN

¶ A vital, human, dramatic presentation of this great International gathering. Though he never loses sight of the main issues, the author gives the small but significant details in a manner that is peculiarly interesting.

¶ It is written with such extreme simplicity that it will be of interest to those who normally do not pay attention to international affairs; while its observations are so penetrating that it will appeal to all specialists in world politics.

¶ In short, it is a remarkable book, not only of timely interest, but also of permanent value.

THE GREAT ADVENTURE AT WASHINGTON

The Story of the Conference

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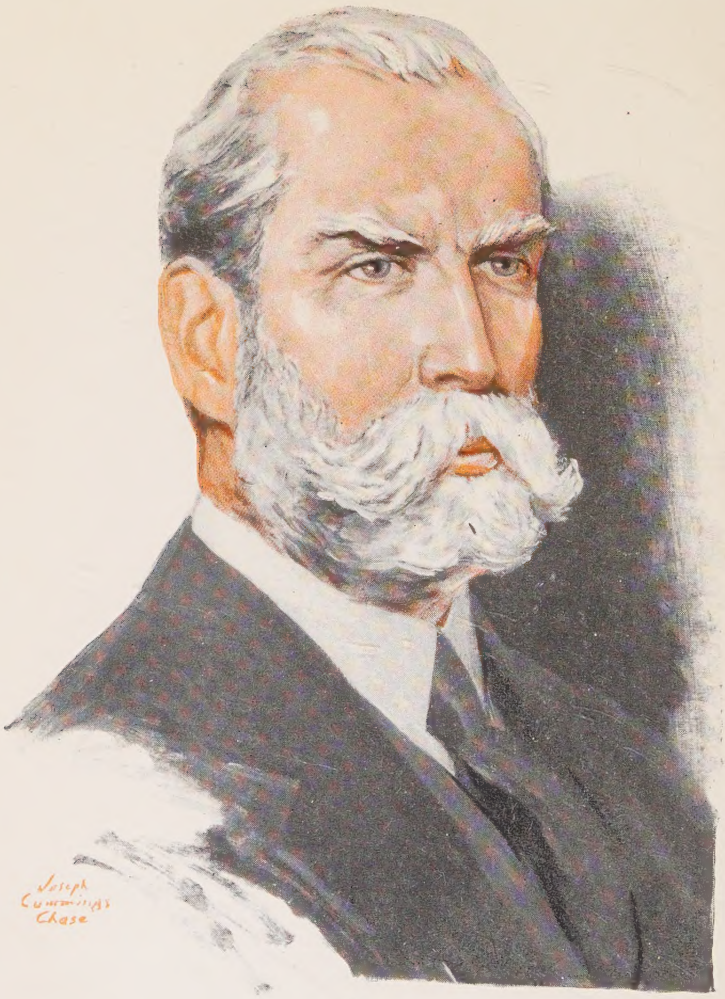

"Hughes has dropped that rigidity and self-consciousness which used to make his personality seem stiff and cold, and was a barrier between him and the common man. The popular phrase, 'Hughes has loosened up' expresses it perfectly."

THE GREAT ADVENTURE AT WASHINGTON

The Story of the Conference

BY

MARK SULLIVAN

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PREFACE

You can't do anything that involves as much work and thought as this book did without learning a good deal; and one of the most penetrating reflections that arose out of putting this book together is on the difference between writing history long after the event, and writing it while it is in the making. The latter process has handicaps, which are both great and obvious; but also it has advantages that are great but not obvious. We commonly say that an adequate and comprehensive history of an event like the Washington Conference can only be written years later, after all the documents have become accessible. That is true. But it is also true that what these later and more pretentious histories may gain in exhaustiveness, they are pretty sure to lose in vividness.

I know that all the official documents in the world can't convey as much essential fact to the distant and future reader as did the look on Lord Beatty's face to the historian who had the advantage of being in the room when Mr. Hughes, in that sensational opening speech of

his, said that he would expect the British to scrap their four great *Hoods,* and made equally irreverent mention of the *King George the Fifth.* That was truly history in the making, and Beatty's look was the stuff of which real history is made—when the historians can get it, which they usually can't. The future historian may or may not identify that particular moment as the exact point where two great nations changed their relation to each other and the relation of each to the rest of the world; at the exact moment when Great Britain ceased—and knew she ceased—to have the exclusive franchise for laying down the law about navies and sea-power and control of the sea altogether. Also I may or may not be right in saying that this particular moment had this particular significance. All this, and the whole body of the broad effects of Hughes's speech on the history of the world, is discussed in Chapter XI. The point I am making now is that no future historian, who must depend upon digging into the official documents and examining the coded cables that raced across the Atlantic, will ever find anything as vivid as that look on Lord Beatty's face. Lord Beatty is the head of the British Navy—and the British Navy was being treated impiously. Lord Beatty is the custodian in his generation of a tradition that has lasted

for over two hundred years, and that tradition was being menaced.

However, the more complete picture of all this is in Chapter I, which pictures that dramatic opening session in full. The point I am making now is merely that the vividness of scenes like this is the advantage that the contemporary historian—even though a hurried journalist, with no pretense to exhaustiveness or authoritativeness, or even to absolute accuracy—has over the formal historian who must depend on documents.

Of course, I would not have the reader take this book for more than it is. Most of it was written while the Conference was on. Much of it was written on the day, and even within the minute, that the event took place. While this is an advantage, and gives the value of a vividness not otherwise easily attainable, to those major parts of the narrative that describe events or recite facts, it is, on the other hand, a handicap in respect to such occasional parts of the book as seem to express or imply judgments. A momentary judgment based on a single episode may and often does differ from a judgment that takes into account the long chain of antecedent facts of which the immediate episode is only one incident. For this reason, the reader is asked not to take as necessarily final all the judgments that are frequently expressed or im-

plied in the course of describing events. The intention has been to make the book primarily a narrative or exposition, rather than one dealing with conclusions; but there is no such thing as a narrative that is wholly free from the bias of opinion. Opinion, judgment, bias, prejudice, are inherent in the choice of words and the turn of phrases. I lay emphasis on this point because, in putting this book together, in reviewing the despatches I wrote from day to day, I have been impressed on several occasions with the fact that an incident which I witnessed myself, which I thought I understood fully, and to which I gave an interpretation that at the time seemed the one clearly called for, turns out to bear a somewhat different interpretation when considered in the light of other facts learned of afterward.

As a narrative, I have tried to give the book order and sequence, of course; and otherwise to arrange it so as to give a connected story, in which the reader distant from the scene will find clearness and ease of understanding. In this effort to give a connected narrative, in making the bridges and connections between the things I actually saw or knew, I have had necessarily to treat of many matters of which I did not have personal knowledge. In these parts of the narrative, I have had to depend on the accounts of

others; or, in some cases, especially in dealing with such subjects as motive and the like, on surmise. In the cases where I have had to depend on a certain amount of surmise, I have tried to be careful to say so. There are considerable areas of the history of the Conference as to which many of the details are still subjects of surmise to everybody except the few who actually took part in them, and who, as yet, for reasons of different degrees of soundness, regard it as desirable to keep some details of the Conference, for the present, within the field of unwritten history. Even as to those broad parts of the Conference which were open to anybody to find out about, no one of the journalists or other observers, and even no one of the delegates, can tell the whole story. No one observer, nor any one delegate knew or knows all the details of everything that happened. No one person knows, as a matter of personal observation, more than a fraction of the whole story. There was too much of it—much too much—for any one person to be able to follow it all. The Associated Press had as many as twenty of their best men covering the Conference. They were the best possible men for the work. The A. P. man who is resident at Tokio came on the boat with the Japanese delegates. Roberts came from Paris with the French.

Cortesi came from Rome with the Italians, and similarly others from the farthest outposts of the A. P. wires. It was an extraordinary mobilization of the men who were best trained and best adapted by their individual experience for the work in hand. But not all of those twenty men combined could write a complete narrative of everything that took place. As to any one man, the best within his power was to try to be sure to be present at the more important events as they arose from day to day; and the present account, so far as it goes in the direction of personal narrative, does not purport to be more than an eye-witness's account of the more important events, supplemented by the analysis and other narrative necessary to enable the reader readily to understand the Conference as a whole.

Some of the events thus pictured are of such moment that hardly any words used to express the degree of their importance could be unreasonably superlative. Both Mr. Balfour and Lord Lee, as well as many others, have spoken of that sensational opening session in terms which, if they came from men of less responsible station, might seem extravagant. But the truth is that opening session, in its dramatic quality, and in its place in history, was all that Mr. Balfour said of it; and this book would

justify itself, would be worth the pains it took, and adequately account for the pleasure that the writing of it gave, if success has accompanied the effort to make the opening chapter a clear and easily comprehended picture of "that inspired moment . . . that fateful Saturday . . . unique in history."

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THE GREAT ADVENTURE AT WASHINGTON

The Story of the Conference

THE GREAT ADVENTURE AT WASHINGTON

CHAPTER I

"THAT INSPIRED MOMENT . . . THAT FATEFUL SATURDAY"

THE room was in a white-marble building, set well back from the broad asphalted drive that leads from the White House down to the Potomac—a building of serene and unobtrusive beauty, founded by American woman as a memorial to ancestors who fought in the Revolution.

As the hurrying crowds came on foot and by motor on that chilly November morning, there was in their manner the eagerness of persons who anticipate a great event. Within the room the first impression, to the present writer, was one of contrast to a previous experience. "How infinitely more beautiful," runs the first line in my notebook, "is this room than the glaring red and gold of the room at Paris where the Peace Conference was held." In the sense of con-

trast made by the homely simplicity of this American room, with its white panelled walls on which the only touches of colour were the paintings of George and Martha Washington and the appropriate flags, there was a premonition of the historic change of world leadership that was to take place within an hour—a change not merely in the physical sense, from Europe to America, but a spiritual change, a complete about-face in the direction and goal of mankind's highest expression of organized effort.

The galleries filled up first, and there was a measure of the elevation of the event in the quality of those who composed the audience. Persons who, in other places, are themselves the actors in not inconsiderable matters were on this occasion spectators. The massive John W. Weeks came slowly down the steep steps of the gallery, his alert and vigorous attention divided between watching his step and casting a vigilantly appraising eye upon the forum below. Over Weeks's shoulder peered the homely and friendly face of the equally massive Denby. The simplicity of Denby's countenance, its typical American quality, brought out by the contrast with so many foreign faces elsewhere in the crowd, caused one of those curious and irrelevant leaps of memory which expressed itself in my jotting down in my notebook a line I

once saw above an old hearthstone, "East, West —Home's Best." Among the other Cabinet members, the frail figure and salient features of Will Hays stood out with a manner of projecting electric emanations of his dynamic personality in the direction of stimulus and encouragement to the actors below. In a box directly over the forum, Mrs. Harding sat, erect and watchful. Not once from the beginning to the end of the session did her back touch the back of her chair. Beside her sat the austere Coolidge, his cold blue eye intent upon the forum. The daughter of Theodore Roosevelt (and wife of Congressman Nicholas Longworth) sat much as she used to sit day after day throughout the League of Nations debate in the Senate, leaning over the railing with a little of the manner of an imperial dictator at a contest of Roman gladiators, her dusky, almost sombrous features having an air of challenging watchfulness, almost as if she meant to convey an imperious message: "Let no American fail in his duty, on pain of my displeasure."

Directly across in the gallery was a solid phalanx of Senators, destined a little later to do a most un-Senatorlike thing. On the floor, in direct contact with the delegates, were the three hundred newspaper men, in their field as picked a group of the elect as were the delegates them-

selves. William Jennings Bryan, entering in his silk hat and old-fashioned cape, had something of the air of an Old Testament prophet, not quite sure, yet, whether to shed benevolence on the occasion or to thunder anathema if things should go wrong. Close by him, the broad and smiling face of William Allen White of Kansas radiated wholesome optimism and friendliness, as typically American as anything in the room. The editor of the London *Times,* after a lifetime of the politics of London, Rome, and Vienna, was for the first time recording an American drama. The editor of the Paris *Matin* sat with a Korean to the right of him and the editor of the Shanghai *Shun Pao* to his left. Wells, the British author of the "Outline of History," was framed in a solid mass of forty Japanese. The life-time reporter of thirty years of wars on three continents, Henry W. Nevinson, of the Manchester *Guardian,* was here to report an event infinitely more to his liking. In the section reserved for the Supreme Court sat the venerable Oliver Wendell Holmes of Massachusetts. Close by him, Justice Brandeis had perhaps as intent and embracing an eye, as quickly apprehending a mind, as any man in the audience, and on this occasion the lean and supple strength of that keen mind was stretched to the utmost in tense watchfulness. He had no

interest in the social give-and-take of smiles and nods that characterized the settling down of the audience. For him, this was not a mere picturesque spectacle—it was the machinery of nations at work to grind out a momentous experiment; and you felt that if at any instant anything should go wrong, either by mischance or by the furtive dropping of a monkey-wrench, Brandeis would be the man who would know most quickly and accurately just what had happened and who had done it and why. As it turned out, the machine worked with sensational momentum, and when it ground out its utterly unexpected product, Brandeis's countenance was that of a man transported.

On the floor the first of the delegates to stroll in to where the green-covered tables were set end-to-end in an open square was Lodge of Massachusetts. My notes say "strolled," and that was the correct description of his listless manner of having done this sort of thing very often, quite in the course of the day's work. At the moment I smiled at it as an expression of that New England manner which decrees that you must never be excited or appear to be much impressed by the importance of anything whatever you may happen to be doing. But as I reread my notes to-day, I wonder whether there was not in the dégagé manner a deeper and

more pregnant art than merely living up to the personal, family, state, and sectional tradition whose requirement is that you must never seem to take yourself too seriously, and must always contrive to look a little bored when you are doing something exceptionally important. Lodge, at that moment, had a greater reason to cover up inner excitement with outer calm, for, as we now know, he was one of the only nine men who knew—this phase is the one the chaste Balfour used later to describe it—"the blow that was going to fall."

One by one the others came in and found their way to their chairs along the sides of the tables that formed a hollow square. We noticed that when Briand sought his seat on the side that formed the top of the square, he did not find it there. The Americans and British filled all the top-side seats; and we thought we noticed something a little less than gratification on the countenance of the dark and heavy Frenchman when he found his seat around the corner, on the side. In all the later sessions we observed there had been a new shuffling of the seats, and one of the British delegates, Ambassador Geddes, had been pushed around the corner to the left, so as to give France a seat at the head of the table. The incident was small, but it went to the heart of some of the things that

happened about France during the subsequent weeks.[1]

Suddenly there was a little burst of applause. It was for Hughes. The other American delegates gathered round him, and all four of them took their seats. Root looked cool, inscrutable, and a little as if he were hiding some embarrassment with summoned sternness. All four of the Americans, and especially Underwood, who was probably conscious of his Senatorial cronies in the gallery, had a little of the embarrassed and deferential temerity of the bridegroom at a wedding, who expects to be smiled at for all this fuss and ceremony. Those of us who follow Hughes closely here in Washington from day to day have come, in a humorously friendly way, to gauge the way things are going with him by the state of his whiskers. To-day we whispered to each other that every hair was at a satisfactorily upward angle. After the thing happened, Washington buzzed with the gossip of specific stories of how tense and nervous the

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1 I notice that Colonel Repington, who was the correspondent at the Conference for the London *Daily Telegraph*, also observed this episode, and said of it, "The French delegates were furious that they were not at the top table, and Jusserand was white and clenched his fists."

I will return to this episode in Chapter VIII, which deals with "France at Washington." I ought to say here, however, that the original arrangement of seats was strictly according to the diplomatic rule that governs such matters; and that the re-arrangement of seats so as to give Briand a seat at the top table was an example—the first of many—of the way the Americans took extraordinary pains to show deference to the extremely sensitive *amour propre* of the French.

American delegates had been over the consciousness of the daring thing they were about to do. For the most part there was nothing to these stories. Hughes had not failed to sleep the night before, and Root showed no sign of relief over ended suspense. It is true that all four of them had shared some sense of strain a week before, when they first evolved the plan and determined to try to put it through; but on the day the thing was done they had the calmness of men as to whom, so far as their own minds were concerned, the decision had been made and the die cast.

Suddenly there was applause; it rose quickly in volume as realization of the occasion for it spread throughout the audience. Harding had entered. For the first time, the crowd rose. Harding took his seat, and the audience with him. Then Hughes spoke the first words of the Conference. It was a brief sentence to announce the prayer. Hughes's voice was strong and full-throated. It had a reassuring quality. It inspired confidence. When the prayer was over, Hughes rose again and said six words: "The President of the United States."

Harding, as he rose, had his habitual air of disarming and ingratiating modesty. He bowed very formally and, for an American, deeply, and began.

In the overshadowing nature of what came soon afterward, the quality of that opening speech of Harding's has been lost sight of. As it happens, I had also heard Harding, the day before, make his other speech, at the burial ceremony of the unknown soldier, when he ended by repeating the Lord's Prayer. The two speeches remain in my mind together, and the effect they made at the time on one who followed them closely, can be expressed by the hurried memorandum I made that day in the Conference. It was a note meant less to describe the speech, as such, than to express the essence of what Harding's spirit seemed to breathe: "Warren Harding," I wrote, "has put his mind on war, and the end of his reflections is that he hates and loathes it. He will go as far as he safely can toward ending it."

I suspect that in Harding's mind, as in my own, and in the minds of nearly all the delegates and others in Washington at the time, the two events coming on two succeeding days were merged, in a sense, and were felt as one—the burial of the unknown soldier, who symbolized our grief over the sacrifices of the war just passed; and the opening of the Conference, which symbolized our hope of making other such sacrifices unnecessary. Certain it is that the most earnest and moving part of this speech

of Harding's at the Conference opening was the passage in which he spoke the emotions that had come to him the day before:

> Here in the United States we are but freshly turned from the burial of an unknown American soldier, when a nation sorrowed while paying him tribute. Whether it was spoken or not, a hundred millions of our people were summarizing the inexcusable causes, the incalculable cost, the unspeakable sacrifices, and the unutterable sorrows; and there was the ever-impelling question: How can humanity justify or God forgive? Human hate demands no such toll; ambition and greed must be denied it. If misunderstanding must take the blame, then let us banish it.

But if this was the most moving part of the speech, the most expressive of that brooding melancholy and the sense of the need of searching our hearts, which still hung over us from the day before, it was a different passage that brought out the most sharply prompt applause, the most deeply ringing approval. That came when Harding spoke in the spirit of stern demand, when he compressed into a single, compact sentence his own and America's determination to bring about the purpose for which the Conference had been called. Harding's manner, as he raised his eyes from his manuscript and leaned stiffly out toward the delegates, took on the same stern quality as his words. There

was a hint of challenge, completely restrained but nevertheless easily recognizable by any one who might oppose—the expression of one with whom it is a rule of life to be placable and gentle, but who on this occasion, has the unyielding determination of a deeply moved man, a glint of stubborn strength in a purpose patiently arrived at:

> I can speak officially only for the United States. Our hundred millions frankly want less of armament and none of war.

The approval of the audience for this sentiment, which was no less a sentiment than a challenge, was immediate and prolonged. (Incidentally it was interesting to observe that it was William Jennings Bryan who most quickly caught the import of Harding's words and manner. For the moment, Harding was a fighting man trumpeting out a cause; and it was as one fighting man to another that Bryan dropped his pencil and paper, leaped to his feet, and, leaning far out toward the speaker, led the applause with all the fire and fervor of one of his most evangelically inspired impulses.) When the applause died down, Harding concluded his address with a less stern note, an appealing call for coöperation in "a service to mankind . . . a better order which will tranquillize the world."

As Harding ended his address, he again took on his habitual manner of self-effacing modesty. He tried to satisfy the clamouring audience with a smile of appreciation and gratitude as he began to move away toward the door. But Hughes grasped his hand and shook it glowingly. That caused the applause to rise again. Harding, still smiling and bowing bashfully, kept trying to edge toward the door. But Balfour also grasped his hand, and then Briand and Viviani and all the others who could reach him as he made his way toward the door with as much speed as he could manage without seeming to lack courtesy to the applauding audience and to the various delegates who were reaching out to congratulate him. Finally, he succeeded in edging his way beneath the gallery, and with a last diffident wave of his arm to the audience, stepped rapidly through the door.

In the resumption of the course of the proceedings occurred one of those incidents—the second in the day—so faint in their happening that only the most acutely observant took in their significance, but nevertheless having a pregnant bearing on much that occurred in the subsequent weeks. Mr. Hughes, resuming the direction of the Conference, remarked that inasmuch as copies of the President's speech had already been

printed in French as well as English, and had been distributed on the desks in front of all the delegates, he presumed that, in order to save time, the repeating of the speech by the interpreter in French might be waived. "Is that agreeable to you, M. Briand?" he inquired.

Mr. Hughes's question was repeated in French. M. Briand took it in; and with a manner designed to make it clear that he was merely willing for the moment to waive something that was seriously and indisputably within his right to insist upon if he so chose, replied, speaking in French, "Since, as you say, there has a translation been circulated, in order to save time, we shall not insist on having a French translation of the speech."

It was from episodes so slight as this that we learned how large a factor the sensitive *amour propre* of the French played in the Conference. The fact that Mr. Hughes felt it necessary to be punctilious about asking for this permission, even in the case of a speech that had already been translated into French and printed in a document that lay on the desks of all the delegates, and to give Briand the opportunity to grant the permission formally in a public session, was illustrative of the deference that had always to be paid to the *amour propre* of the French. Only

very rarely was a speech translated into Japanese, and never into Italian or any of the other languages represented at the table. The French delegates were highly self-conscious about the proud place their nation had held for six centuries of history, a little uncomfortably aware that that place had become somewhat less elevated, relative to new nations like America and Japan, and acutely on their guard against anything that might seem to diminish France's dignity and ancient prerogatives. One of these prerogatives is the fact that French has long been the official language of diplomacy. In the present Conference, it would be far-fetched so to regard it. The Conference was on the soil of an English-speaking country, and the English-speaking peoples participating in it were almost a hundred and seventy millions to France's forty. Nevertheless, France, in this respect as in all others, was at every moment watchfully punctilious about her dignity; and we noticed that Mr. Hughes was careful not to make any suggestions about waiving the repetition in French of any speech or document except in cases where repetition was plainly not called for, and even then only with care to ask formal permission of the head of the French delegation. In all the subsequent sessions of the Conference, practically every

speech was laboriously repeated in French by the interpreter.[1]

This episode consumed less time than the telling of it. I have dwelt on it merely because it enables me to point out, as of the time it happened, one of the many examples of French watchfulness about their dignity and prerogatives, a factor which contributed much of what was at the source of the several days' deadlock which the French caused during the later weeks of the Conference.

After this little exchange, Mr. Balfour rose to make the usual sort of motion looking to permanent organization. But Mr. Balfour is never merely perfunctory. As he had listened to President Harding's speech, his quick and apprehensive mind had picked out three words which were the dominating note of it. These three words Mr. Balfour quoted, and proposed them as the motto of the Conference, "Simplicity, Honesty, Honour." He repeated the words twice, impressively. It was quick in Mr. Balfour to catch the note, and graceful of him to call attention to it in so happy a way. He had

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1 The reporters used to call this "telling it to Briand." One of the reporters noticed how watchful the French interpreter was lest something go by without repetition in French. "That the French official interpreter," wrote Mr. Nicholas Roosevelt, "doesn't yet quite trust Mr. Hughes to remember his existence is evident from his anxiety on several occasions. Twice during to-day's session he had to lean forward as a speaker was finishing and shake his finger at Mr. Hughes to remind him that his turn came next."

managed all this, which was a whole milestone toward establishing the right atmosphere for the Conference, in two minutes.[1] Then, with equally graceful words and manner, he proposed that Mr. Hughes, as representing the nation which was the host of the Conference, should be its permanent head. All the other delegates nodded approval, and Mr. Hughes took the permanent chair.

II

Covering what now began to happen, my notes read: "The audience rises and applauds.

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1 It would be inadequate to pass this episode by without calling further attention to it. What Mr. Balfour did was to create the thing that musicians would call the motif of the Conference. It was the sort of thing the finished and polished diplomat knows how to do; and that only a man can do who has the knowledge and confidence that go with long experience, and is able, in an intellectual sense, so to speak, to move quickly on his feet. As a bit of technique in the art of diplomacy, it called for admiration, no less than for the fundamental good intention it reflected on Mr. Balfour's part. When it happened, I felt instantly that Mr. Balfour was deliberately seizing this fleeting and elusive opportunity to create the right atmosphere for the Conference, to fix the motif, so to speak; and I was confirmed in this impression when, on the last day of the session, I again found him, in his closing speech, harking back, with a true and subtle sense of dramatic art, to this same note. The speech with which Mr. Balfour wound up the Conference on February 4th, began with these words: "On Saturday, the 12th of November, exactly twelve weeks ago, the President of the United States, in an eloquent speech with which he inaugurated our meetings, asked us to approach our labours with the full consciousness that we were working in the service of mankind, and that the spirit that should animate us was the spirit of simplicity, honesty, and honour. Looking back over that twelve weeks, I think we may say, without undue self-esteem, that that advice, so nobly tendered by the head of the state under whose hospitality our meetings have been carried on, has been taken, and that we have had the consciousness that we were working in the service of mankind, that we had the consciousness that if that service was to be of any avail, it must be carried out in the spirit, to use the President's words, of simplicity, honesty, and honour."

You can read in the shining, smiling faces of the audience how much Hughes is approved. Everybody believes in him and wishes him well."

It was in this friendly, warming atmosphere that Hughes commenced his speech. As I look back on it now and examine this speech minutely, I suspect he wrote it as a lawyer rather than as a dramatist. In that obvious and frequently gossiped about change that has taken place in Hughes's personality since the year he ran for President, it is evident he has learned some of that dramatic art which every public man must understand in some degree or another—that realization that the thing you do is not the whole story; that the manner of your doing it is also important; that the destination of your thought is in the minds of the people, and the success of what you hope to accomplish is measured by the degree to which the public mind takes it in and reacts upon it; and that some command of the arts of giving wings to your purpose and making it dramatically vivid to the world you hope to move, is not merely an allowable but a necessary part of the equipment of any one who would lead the world or mould it to his purposes. All this Hughes has learned during the time between his rather too drab and spiritless candidacy for President, and his becoming Secretary of State; and it is this understanding that makes

his conferences with the newspaper men the most largely attended, except Harding's, of any in Washington, and in one sense the most interesting and stimulating of all. (I say Hughes has "learned this art;" but having written it that way, I reflect that this is not, in Hughes's case, the most accurate way of putting it. I suspect the more discerning truth would say, not that Hughes has taken on something, but that he has left off something. He has dropped that rigidity and self-consciousness which used to make his personality seem stiff and cold, and was a barrier between him and the common man. The popular phrase, "Hughes has loosened up," expresses it perfectly. In other words, he has permitted to come out in him that natural, human sense of the dramatic which, in one degree or another, is part of the heritage of every man. The Hughes of to-day strides out in front of the audience with his muscles loose and lets the world see him as he is. He has got rid of the strained and cautious inhibitions that were an artificial insulation between him and the crowd. He lets all the world look in at all there is of his mind and heart as they move freely in action. However——)

In the latter part of his speech, and in the setting he gave to his performance as a whole, Hughes, as all the world now knows, showed a

superb sense of the dramatic quality of the relation to the world that he and his country and his purpose had that day. But the early part of his speech was that of Lawyer Hughes, or Justice Hughes—the rather stiff and cold and even prosy Hughes of a few years ago. He started off with a chronological history of the occasion, beginning with the invitations that Harding sent to the various countries. Then he passed to a history of previous attempts at disarmament, reading a long quotation from the pretentious rescript with which the late Emperor of Russia initiated the Hague Conference twenty-three years ago. After a good deal of this, the reporters, who have among other functions that of providing a rather cynical comic relief to solemn occasions, leaned back in their chairs with whispered words of "old stuff;" and for a little while devoted their capacities for observation and description to vivaciously ribald whisperings among themselves about what a boon the whiskers of Admiral de Bon would be to American cartoonists; or to serious and envying tributes to the inscrutability of the features of Baron Kato as an equipment—presumably wasted in the Baron's case—for certain card games which are a more characteristic part of the national culture of America than of Japan.

The same sense of relaxation was shared by

the audience. It was a period of looking about the room, recognizing acquaintances, and nodding to them.

Then for a moment there came into Hughes's voice the same stern note of imperious demand that had marked a part of Harding's speech. "The world looks to this conference," he said, "to relieve humanity of the crushing burden created by competition in armament, and it is the view of the American Government that we should meet that expectation without any unnecessary delay." At that the audience applauded. That was the kind of talk the crowd wanted. It was American talk, and it sounded like action.

But again Hughes dropped back to historical details of the First Hague Conference and the Second Hague Conference; and again the audience settled back in their seats, only to come forward alertly and with prolonged applause when Hughes said, with an emphasis that took the form of slow enunciation of the words, with pauses between them, "Competition—in armament—must stop."

That again was action-talk. Better yet, by this time, Hughes was through with lawyer generalities, and had become completely a fighting man giving voice to a call for instant action. Sentence followed sentence charged with the note of insistent demand:

We can no longer content ourselves with investigations, with statistics, with reports, and with the circumlocution of inquiry. The time has come and this Conference has been called, not for general resolutions or mutual advice, but *for action.*

At these words the audience once more came forward in their seats, not again to know a moment of relaxed interest that day, but instead, to go forward from one climax to another of exaltation. *"There is only one adequate way out and that is to end it now,"* Hughes exclaimed, and by this time his voice had become so vigorous that it took on almost the quality of harshness, and his manner was vehement in proportion. It ought to have been time for somebody to guess that something extraordinary was coming, but no one did. The strength of what he had already said seemed to be enough justification for the vigour of his manner, and it occurred to no one to infer that there would be more yet. It was, indeed, beyond what any one expected of the first day's session when Hughes said: "It is proposed that for a period of not less than ten years there should be no further construction of capital ships." But from that, Hughes went on with the solemnly formal statement of America's proposal:

I am happy to say that I am at liberty to go beyond these general propositions and, on behalf of the American

delegation, acting under the instructions of the President of the United States, to submit to you a concrete proposition for an agreement for the limitation of naval armament.

At this moment, from the gallery section reserved for United States Senators, there burst a ululant yell; and in all the dramatic tenseness of the occasion, which had come to call for the focussing of the utmost powers of every reporter there, one of them, true to the rôle of supplying a slightly sardonic comic relief for an occasion of which the dynamic pregnancy was almost beyond enduring, remarked, "If somebody else did that over in their Senate gallery, they'd throw him out on his bean."

Now Hughes went on with the details of what he called America's "concrete proposition"—the very phrase carried crisp and homely implications of something direct and businesslike. He read first the four big principles:

"(1) That all capital-ship building programmes, either actual or projected, should be abandoned;

"(2) That further reduction should be made through the scrapping of certain of the older ships;

"(3) That in general regard should be had to the existing naval strength of the Powers concerned;

"(4) That the capital-ship tonnage should be used as the measurement of strength for navies and a proportionate allowance of auxiliary combatant craft prescribed."

From this, without a pause, Hughes went straight to figures of tonnage and names of ships. He introduced it with the shortest possible sentence, "The United States proposes, if this plan is accepted"—and then enumerated:

"(1) To scrap all capital ships now under construction. This includes six battle cruisers and seven battleships on the ways and in course of building, and two battleships launched.

"The total number of new capital ships thus to be scrapped is fifteen. The total tonnage of the new capital ships when completed would be 618,000 tons.

"(2) To scrap all of the older battleships up to, but not including, the *Delaware* and *North Dakota*. The number of these old battleships to be scrapped is fifteen. Their total tonnage is 227,740 tons.

"Thus the number of capital ships to be scrapped by the United States, if this plan is accepted, is thirty, with an aggregate tonnage (including that of ships in construction, if completed) of 845,740 tons."

Hughes paused, and that pause, we know now, was the most pregnant moment of this most dramatic day.

Everybody thought the speech was over. Hughes had stated what America proposed to do. That he should have done this at all on the opening day was a thrilling fact; the sweeping character of what he proposed added thrill to thrill. It was more than any person in the au-

dience had expected. It was abundant reason for the exhilaration of surprise and approval that swept, in exultant waves, back and forth across the room.

The applause was in the nature of an immense and burning ceremonial for the close of a day that had made unprecedented history. That the day was over was taken for granted. That there might be more yet was beyond the dreams of anybody in the room, except nine men. As we recall it now, we might have guessed something from the attitude and manner of the American delegates, especially Root. If the audience had the manner of everything being over, the American delegates did not. They were not relaxed. They did not lean back in their chairs nor join in the smiling joyfulness. On the contrary, they were deeply serious and tense. Root, especially, looked even more austerely grave than usual. He kept his eyes focussed on vacancy straight ahead of him, as if he did not want any one to look into them, or as if he had concentrated all his mentality into listening watchfully to what he knew was coming, and to how it would be received.

And, indeed, the thing that Hughes now did was very, very daring. If you were not an American, if you were writing from the standpoint of Great Britain or Japan, you might

make out a fair case that it was a little overdaring, that it went beyond the limits of international graciousness. That Hughes should have stated exactly what America proposed to do, in concrete terms of tonnage, and should have named the very ships that America proposed to scrap, was bold and unexpected, but it was wholly within his rights. But there was greater daring than I think any one has ever publicly called attention to, even any Englishman, in what Hughes now proceeded to do. He turned toward the British delegates and resumed:

"It is proposed that Great Britain:

"(1) Shall stop further construction of the four new *Hoods*"——

As Hughes mentioned this name, sacred to the British Navy, and as he went on to name the *King George the Fifth,* and others yet, Admiral Beatty came forward in his chair. His eyes first widened and then narrowed; and he looked at Hughes with an expression nothing less than the astonished but instantly combative dignity with which the head of the British Navy, standing tranquilly on the bridge of his flagship in a peaceful sea, might receive an unanticipated and wholly uncalled-for shot across his bow; and who most decidedly and pointedly

wants to know what it's all about. He might have said, if he had spoken, "Here, you—who are you? Does Britannia rule the waves, or doesn't she?" That the shot came from a whiskered person who most obviously had never trod a quarterdeck, nor even "polished up the handle of the big front door" of any Admiralty office, might be an element either of extenuation or of deepened offense, so far as you could gather from Admiral Beatty's slightly staggered and deeply disturbed expression. Lord [1] Beatty is the head of the British Navy—and the British Navy was being treated impiously. Lord Beatty is the custodian in his generation of a tradition that has lasted for over two hundred years, and that tradition was being menaced—so it appeared at the moment, certainly—by an alien, a whiskered person with a loud voice and an utterly unrepentant manner. Lord Beatty, by a coincidence that is more often broken than kept, happens to have a good deal of that bulldog appearance which is traditionally associated with the headship of the British Navy. When Hughes began to enumerate British ships to be sunk—ships whose very names are mile-

[1] I have referred to Lord Beatty interchangeably as "Earl Beatty," "Admiral Beatty" and "Lord Beatty." This is according to custom. Lord Beatty is First Sea Lord, which means that he is the professional head of the British Navy, as contrasted with his colleague at the Conference whom I mention later, Lord Lee, who is First Lord of the Admiralty, and is therefore, so to speak, the civilian head of the British Navy.

stones in the history of British sea-power—Lord Beatty came forward in his chair with the manner of a bulldog, sleeping on a sunny doorstep, who has been poked in the stomach by the impudent foot of an itinerant soap-canvasser seriously lacking in any sense of the most ordinary proprieties or considerations of personal safety.[1]

It was, in fact, without any exaggeration, a historic moment. What it was could not be more compactly expressed than in the words (the, let us say, extreme modernness of them need make them no less useful for the vivid recording of history)—the words of the American reporter who took one startled glance at Hughes and then exclaimed in a piercing whisper to his neighbour, "Great balls of fire, the man's telling the British Navy where it gets off!"

Just how much Hughes's words, and the results of the Conference altogether, may mean in the history of sea-power is matter for more careful statement elsewhere. But, at the least, you could not fail to recall what Charles II said

[1] I was interested to observe, after the Conference closed, that this impression I had, of the agitation of the British, is borne out by what Colonel Repington set down in his diary at the time: "It is an audacious and astonishing scheme, and took us off our feet. The few men to whom I spoke babbled incoherently. What will they say in London? To see a British First Lord of the Admiralty, and another late First Lord, sitting at a table with the American Secretary of State telling them how many ships they might keep and how many they should scrap, struck me as a delightfully fantastic idea."

to the French Ambassador when they were arranging a partnership of land and sea-power for the overthrow of Holland: "It is the custom of the English to command at sea." For generations, Great Britain, not as an equal, but always as chief, has laid down the law of the sea, as Mahan says, "unchecked by foe, unshared by friend;" and at this moment a casual and irreverent American lawyer with a loud voice was telling Great Britain, in terms of lawyer-like formality, to scrap her four great *Hoods,* her predreadnaughts and her first-line battleships. Let no one wonder that Admiral Beatty, custodian in his generation of that two centuries of hitherto unshared tradition, should show the emotion that he did.

Lord Lee, who, while he is the civil head of the Admiralty, is not a professional fighting man, was equally moved but showed it in his more scholar-like way. His manner, if it had been put in words, would have said, " Isn't this —I beg your pardon, of course—but isn't this— isn't it a little unusual? Hadn't we better stop a minute?" In his excitement he reached about him for pencil and paper to take down the figures of British tonnage that Hughes was calmly consigning to the bottom of the sea.[1] He had

[1] Colonel Repington said that "Secretary Hughes sunk in thirty-five minutes more ships than all the admirals of the world have sunk in a cycle of centuries."

the manner of fearing, in the speed and the air of definiteness and finality with which things were happening, lest something very disturbing to the British Navy might be done and past mending before that forthright, virilely whiskered speaker could be stopped in his headlong swing.

In a moment Hughes had finished telling Great Britain what he expected of them, and turned to the Japanese. In equally concrete terms, of the *Mutsu* and the *Kaga* and the *Tosa,* and battleship No. 8, and cruiser No. 5, he was telling them what he expected of them. I observed, as I read the printed accounts next day, that one of the reporters described the Japanese as having "stirred in their seats and drooped close to the table." Another reporter, Mr. Louis Seibold of the New York *Herald,* noted that " there was no discounting the surprise of Prince Tokugawa, Baron Kato, and Ambassador Shidehara, the delegates from Japan. The Italian, Portuguese, and Belgian envoys, appeared to be greatly pleased if a trifle startled." (I am indebted to my fellow newspaper men, and to some others, for many of these details; I did not see them all.)

Hughes finished, and from now on the session ceased to look like an international conference, and took on the colour of an American political

convention. The joyful exuberance was just like the half-hour after a national convention has nominated a popular candidate. It expressed itself the same way. So much like an old-time Democratic convention was it that when Senator Kenyon, in the gallery, let out a yell for "Briand," most of the crowd thought he had said "Bryan," and expected the latter to leave his writing, among the reporters, and rise up and speak. But Hughes made a smiling gesture to the French spokesman and Briand said a few words about France and international friendliness. Then, in the same way, the crowd called for Tokugawa. Tokugawa is a Prince, and the eighteenth descendant in the line of the Shoguns; but he is also a most smiling, open-faced person whose beaming, humorous good-nature gives denial to the assumption that all Japanese are inscrutable. Tokugawa looks and acts like a friendly, neighbourly grocer in a smallish American town, a grocer who would find quite as much satisfaction in gossiping with his customers as in selling them sugar or collecting bills from them. He spoke a few gracious words which, together with his manner, gave him a place in the kindly regard of the Conference that grew steadily till the day he left for Japan. The next cries were "Italy, Italy." Signor Schanzer spoke more seriously than the

others had. Then Belgium spoke briefly, and finally China, Holland, and Portugal; and then the session ended with a formal motion to meet again three days later.

III

I might close this account of the opening meeting with any one of a dozen incidents that crowd my recollection. I might close it with the remark I myself made to Hughes, which, in the spirit of excited congratulation, was, "Talk about open diplomacy! That was megaphone diplomacy." But I could hardly end with that, without reciting also the fact that later on in the Conference there was some feeling that Hughes let the Conference, on a few occasions, get a little further away from open diplomacy than was best for either him or the Conference. Any discussion of this aspect of the Conference will call for greater space than is fitting at this point.

Or I might close the description of this first session with the cryptic and yet adequate remark of the American newspaper man on my left who said, "Well, sir, that was a sure-enough humdinger"—to which the British newspaper man on my right replied, "Quite so"—an extremely serviceable phrase in the idiom of

Englishmen, which supplies adequate comment on something you are not quite sure about.

Or I might end with the written comment of another Englishman who expressed quite accurately what was, on the whole, the milder aspect of British feeling at the end of Hughes's speech. Mr. H. G. Wells really thinks he is an internationalist, and in his forensic writings frequently reviles the British Empire and all such narrow and insular emotions as mere patriotism. But let the British Empire be threatened by anybody else, or by anything more substantially menacing than Wells's own words—let anything real seem to threaten England's place in the world, and Wells can become as hearty a jingo as the crudest of us. The way he scratched the French when they wanted warships and submarines that might menace England was probably the most forceful example of the literature of polite vituperation that arose from the Conference. That, however, belongs in another chapter.[1] What is pertinent here is Wells's reaction to Hughes's speech. Even though restrained and temperate, it was a characteristic expression of British feeling at the moment. Later on the British felt more reassured, but at the time they were a little in the mood of what American slang conveys by the phrase,

[1] What Wells said on that occasion is quoted at length in Chapter IV.

"up in the air." They hadn't fully grasped what had taken place, and they weren't quite sure but what something a little disturbing had happened to the Mistress of the Seas. It was in that mood that Wells wrote in his account of the session:

> We were a little stunned. We had expected the opening meeting to be preliminary, to stick to generalities. After Secretary Hughes had finished, there was a feeling that we wanted to go away and think.[1]

But perhaps the more adequate way to end this chapter, because it is the more exalted, and therefore the way most faithful to the spirit of the occasion, is to quote what was the natural expression, the spontaneous emotion of a high-minded and detached observer, Mr. John W. Owens, of the Baltimore *Sun*. Mr. Owens, describing the close of Hughes's speech, wrote:

> The Conference hall was no longer the scene of a brilliant social function. Rather was it a solemnized gathering of men and women excitedly face-to-face with proposals of enormous potentialities, a gathering of men and women feeling that they were witnessing a game in which vast tragedy lurked behind the door, but a game nevertheless, and their blood was flowing fast before the spectacle

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1 The diary of another Englishman, Colonel Repington, records an almost identical emotion: "We came out in a trance, not quite sure whether we were walking on our heads or our heels."

of the leading player in the game boldly throwing all his cards on the table and offering, as it seemed at first blush anyway, to play the game in the future along lines which offered the greatest hazard for him and for those millions who backed the play.

CHAPTER II

"PAUSE AND CONSIDER" DAYS

THE opening session was over. The American proposals were before the world.

All that afternoon and night, Washington buzzed. The following day being Sunday, people slept late, as on the morning after some great carnival occasion. When they began to come together, there was but one subject of talk, and the characteristic of that talk was not argument or analysis, but solely acclaim for Hughes. Hughes was talked about like a man who has saved a city.

It happened that during this time, Mr. Hamlin Garland was a guest at our house, and on that sunny Sunday morning he and I, in walking about the city, visited several who had been present the night before at the dinner that President and Mrs. Harding gave to the American officials and the visiting delegates. It was without doubt the most impressive gathering of distinguished foreigners that had ever come together in all the history of the White House, and the echoes of it the following day added a touch

to the festive atmosphere of the town. There were interesting stories and echoes of the dinner; how much the ranking woman of the British delegation had been impressed by the simplicity and sincerity of President Harding, next whom she had sat; how much more becomingly beautiful those Chinese women were who wore their native dress, than the one who had discarded her native costume for the latest of Paris fashions, and the like. Occasionally, there were faint echoes of the old diplomacy that had just been kicked into the past: one person had overheard one of the lesser women among the British, who, apparently, had not yet recovered from the puzzled bewilderment into which the suddenness and the sweeping quality of Hughes's proposals had thrown all the British, and who thought it best to keep an anchor in the past, saying to one of the Japanese, "After all, we island empires have a common point of view in these naval matters."

But these remnants of the old personal diplomacy of drawing rooms were recited not for their importance, but in amused good-nature about an incongruous relic of the past, as at someone wearing a crinoline at a 1922 party. The whole burden of the talk was of the other thing—the new diplomacy of Hughes, who laid all the cards on the table and sent his voice ringing into

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the remotest corners of the world, calling on all to look. The town hummed with the name of Hughes.

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But if the atmosphere of Washington generally was that of a carnival, there were two spots that were exceptions. In the Franklin Square Hotel the British naval experts, and in an old-fashioned mansion on Dupont Circle the Japanese naval experts, were busy with blueprints and tables of figures. For them the night before had not been one of pleasure, nor the Sunday morning one of late sleeping. The figures of ships and tonnage and guns in Hughes's proposals had been the result of weeks of minute and devoted work on the part of our American naval experts; and now there must be equally exact figuring on the part of the experts of Great Britain and Japan. They had to check up on Hughes's figures, and estimate just how the plan would work out in its relative effects on their own navies. Among these experts, at first, there were occasional faint flashes of something like suspicion. There was talk of a possible "Yankee trick." There must be some trick in it, some nigger in the wood-pile. It was impossible that the whole story should be on the surface. No statesman had ever been so candid before. It was incredible that any statesman could be so candid. There must be a trick

in the situation somewhere, and these naval sharps were the ones to dig it out. All Saturday afternoon and late that night, and all day Sunday and all day Monday as well, they bent over their charts and figures.

In the hotel where the British had their offices, messengers hurried back and forth, carrying locked tin boxes labelled "Admiralty Strong-room," between the labouring experts and the storeroom that was guarded by an armed marine. It was said that the head of the British Navy, anticipating some weeks of leisurely generalities on the part of the Conference, had made an engagement to go on a visit to Canada the night after the opening session, but cancelled his reservations and bent himself to midnight toil. Within these groups of the naval experts of Great Britain and Japan there was, frankly and properly, the questioning attitude of, so to speak, the counsel for the other party. It was their business to check up with intent care, not merely the final figures Hughes had used, but also the infinitely complex calculations of which these final figures were the result. They had to check up whether the percentage of completion which Hughes had assigned to various vessels of Great Britain and Japan still in process of building were accurate; and a complex multitude of other matters. If, in the surprise by

which they were taken, their natural and proper professional caution went a little further than caution and became something like suspicion, that is not to be wondered at, nor need it be occasion for offense. Once some of them thought they had found the thing that was to be "slipped over" on them. They thought it lay somewhere in the termination of the ten-year naval holiday. Great Britain had not been building any capital ships to speak of during the past three years. America, on the contrary, was in the midst of the greatest building programme of its history. Therefore, the end of the holiday would find America only ten years out of date, while Great Britain would be thirteen years behind the times. Also there was concern over the precise details of permitted replacements; as to whether Great Britain might not find herself, at the end of the ten-year holiday, not only with no modern ships, but with no shipyards equipped to build them—her yards, through lack of use, might become valueless.

With details like this the naval experts were busy, not only those of Great Britain and Japan, but some of our own as well. A considerable section of our navy men believed that the allowance of submarines for America was too small; that our particular situation as regards the defense of the Panama Canal and otherwise, calls

for a larger quantity of this form of naval armament.[1] Also, among our navy men, as among those of the other nations, there could not help but be some sombre reflection about what Hughes had done to the profession that was their pride and their career. Paraphrasing an old Latin salutamus, one of our navy men, that Sunday, said: "We who are about to be abolished, salute you." It was said that Secretary Denby had issued an order calling on the navy men not to criticize or otherwise discuss the plan. That was not true. Mr. Denby issued no such order. To have done so would have been an insult. The theory of our navy is that they are the agents of the civil power of the Government; the navy is the Government's armed fist; and whatever the Government commands, the navy does without question—even when that command is to send thirty ships to the bottom of the sea. In reality, it is probable the principal emotion our navy men had that day was not any concern about their own careers, but rather amusement at the efforts of the foreign experts to find holes in the figures Hughes had got from our own experts. In the course of these efforts, the foreign experts frequently sent formidable

1 While this was the attitude of some of our American Navy men, the reaction of the country as a whole to the retention of the submarine in the Hughes plan was critical. In the course of a few days there arose an outcry against what was called "the viper of the seas." This is covered in Chapter VII.

and minutely detailed requests for information to our experts, asking just how certain figures in the Hughes plan had been arrived at. It was a source of professional pride to the American navy men that the foreign experts, in all the checking up they so laboriously went through, never found a flaw in the American calculations.

Outside these little groups of navy men, Washington was in a holiday mood. Not only Washington but all the country as well. The churches hummed with it. The Episcopal bishop of New York changed the subject of his sermon to hail Hughes as the saviour of civilization. Hardly a congregation in America failed that day to include Hughes and the Conference in its prayers. In some quarters the exaltation reached an evangelical, almost fanatic, pitch. The president of the American Civic Association proposed that outworn or captured cannon, as decorations for public parks, be done away with. The most watchful critic of the Conference, Senator Borah, conceded it was "a splendid beginning." In the utterances of the newspapers, there was no partisan note. The most ardent advocates of the League of Nations, who might readily have fallen into a grudging state of mind, were unstinted in their loyalty and helpfulness. Ex-President Wilson was described as happy over the event and wishing well to the Confer-

ence. The only utterances that departed from unrestrained praise came from those who wanted more. "If we can limit navies, we can end them," said Mr. McAdoo; and added, with a characteristic locution: "Bold, drastic, and courageous measures are required if civilization is to be snatched from the brink of the fateful chasm upon which it now stands."

II

Not only did Washington and the country hum with the great event. The cables buzzed. The wires to Europe carried probably more words that day than on any other day in their history—long narratives from the European reporters here; and from the excited delegates, coded requests to their governments for advice and instructions. The single wire to Japan stuttered, staggered, and fell down, to remain for several weeks anywhere from one to three days behind events, a condition which was the cause of much of the delay in the subsequent negotiations.[1]

Not only did the news fly out to the world. By Monday morning, we began to get back the

[1] To get the answer to one of the most important queries sent by the Japanese delegates to their home government consumed 110 hours. It is pertinent to mention that the price of a single battleship will enable Japan to lay a second cable across the Pacific.

news of its reception. In France, as one correspondent summarized it for American readers, "the idea has thoroughly gripped the Gallic imagination."[1] The Paris *Temps* said that "this astonishing beginning of the Washington Conference indicates the practical idealism lying close to the American heart." But the *Temps* "doubted if England would accept."

It is a fact that for a few hours, London was as dazed as its delegates had been. For a little while "the let-us-pause-and-consider boys," as we called them, had their say. In some sources of British opinion there was a disposition to "withhold immediate judgment." The London *Times* "urged mature consideration." The correspondent of the London *Daily News* said:

> In the first hours of the Conference not merely principles but a scheme elaborated in every detail, is questionable statesmanship. What was wanted was not an American plan for reduction of each individual navy, but a conference plan. I fear a more difficult situation has been created than is yet quite realized.

Let us pause here to admit that we should have some tolerance for this particular point

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1 If these first spontaneous expressions of French feeling were really accurate reflections of the reaction of the French people to the Hughes plan at the time they first learned of it, then we must conclude that what the French delegates subsequently did about naval armament was not truly representative of France.

of view. What this British correspondent described in his despatch as the British expectation, was the expectation of most of the other nations also, and of most Americans as well. The world expected that Hughes would propose a plan from the American point of view, saying what America would be willing to do and what ships we would be willing to scrap; that the British would propose a plan from their point of view, and the Japanese from theirs; and that out of the pooling of these separate plans, after a considerable period of conference and mutual give-and-take, a common plan—a conference plan—would be evolved. In the first chapter I have alluded to the surprise—it was considerably more than surprise—of the British when Hughes began to name ships of theirs, ships with names that epitomize Great Britain's two hundred years of glorious tradition on the sea, which Hughes was proposing should be scrapped. A good case could be made out for the theory that Mr. Hughes might have managed things so as to let the British name their own sacrifices. The British never said anything about this publicly, but it can be taken for granted that they must have felt it. However, you can't have the advantages of the thing that Hughes did, and of the way he did it, without some attendant disadvantages. It was an

essential part of the Hughes plan to get for the Conference that momentum of world-wide support which would attend a complete and concrete plan thrown in front of the world at once. Among its great essential virtues, the Hughes plan short-circuited many futile weeks of debate—debate of a sort that might readily have led to a deadlock. From whatever angle you view it, there is no adequate way of characterizing the Hughes plan except as an act of outstanding genius.[1]

Other expressions from sources of British public opinion were varied in their point of view. Some of the British writers who are authorities on naval matters were caught in a most awkward position. (You could have a good deal of fun with some of the so-called "experts" of one kind or another who did a good deal of writing about the Conference, if you cared to take the trouble to compare their predictions with what actually happened.) In advance of the Conference

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1 I was interested to find this view of the value of the way Hughes began, confirmed by Mr. Balfour himself, who, in his speech on the closing day of the Conference, harked back with the emphasis of much repetition to the psychological value of what Mr. Hughes did and the way he did it. Mr. Balfour said: "If the United States had not had the courage, the breadth of conception, which enabled them to announce on that fateful opening, Saturday, the 12th of November, what their view of armament was, all the rest of our labours would have lost half, and I think much more than half, the value they now possess. . . . To this great consummation all have contributed; but in particular I cannot insist too repeatedly, or with greater earnestness, that it was the inspired moment of November 12th on which all the greatness of this great transacton really depends."

they had been skeptical, and for a day or two they felt they must live up to their rôle. On the very day preceding Hughes's speech, one of the best known English writers on naval matters had written in a group of newspapers:

> Human nature being what it is, and not always amenable to the voice of pure reason, might revolt against this seemingly wanton destruction of state property running into hundreds of millions of dollars. And in Japan, where a nation has condemned itself to virtual penury in order to build battleships, any proposal to scrap these vessels would almost certainly be rejected with passionate indignation.

Having thus, on the day before the Conference, "gone out on a limb" (this is the phrase used among American newspaper men when they deal too confidently with the future) this writer found it necessary, the day after the Conference's first session, to hug close to the branch which was now waving wildly in the hurricanes of world-wide popular approval for what Hughes proposed. He wrote that he thought Great Britain might "accept the plan in principle, with certain minor modifications," but that:

> It is incredible that Japan will agree to do this. The $100,000,000 they have spent on these ships is money which is obtained by intensive taxation and by starving

all other public services. Japanese statesmen lately referred to them as symbols of the nation's sacrifice, and the phrase was not inapt. Knowing something as I do of what these ships mean to Japan, I find it difficult to believe that Admiral Baron Kato can ever bring himself to throw them on the junk heap. But if the proposed cancelling of unfinished vessels is likely to meet with Japanese opposition, the corollary suggestions for scrapping certain ships of the existing fleets assuredly will evoke yet stronger protest, more especially as they would bring about a big reduction in Japan's relative strength as against America and Britain.

It would not be fair or accurate to quote these expressions from the skeptical in Great Britain, from the critical and those of little faith, without also saying that many liberal statesmen and leaders of thought in England sent messages of the most heartening approval and good wishes. The London *Daily Telegraph* said:

We must turn a deaf ear to all cries. As guardians of the interests of generations unborn we must take long views. We must steel our hearts and study this matter with a single eye to the general welfare and not that of this nation only.

From other unofficial sources of British and other foreign opinion, there was similar encouragement. If the burden of the early comment

that came over the cables seemed a little dubious, there was adequate explanation for that. During the first forty-eight hours, it was mostly from official or otherwise high authorities that the comment came; and let us admit that it was the duty of those charged with responsibility to practise caution. If it was demanded that they say anything at all during those first twenty-four hours, when the plan had not yet been wholly grasped in all its ramifications, the only things they could safely or properly say must be conservative. Moreover, any British official who looked this wholesale ship-scrapping programme squarely in the face was bound to realize that it had some unpleasant aspects. Not only did they have to consider the effect on Great Britain's historic position as mistress of the sea. In a more immediate way, they could imagine thousands of dockyard workers ordered to walk out and join the already large army of the unemployed. They must think of the numbers of naval men and officers whose careers would be blighted. It was said that the first comment of one of the heads of the British Navy was: "What shall I do with my ten thousand experts?" That there should be some doubts and even dismay in the minds of responsible officials is no occasion for surprise.

But as the news seeped down among the peo-

ples, there began a rolling chorus of world-wide applause.

However, on the following Tuesday, the third day after the opening session, we were to hear exactly what were to be the official responses of the spokesmen of the other nations.

CHAPTER III

"WE AGREE—IN SPIRIT AND IN PRINCIPLE"

THE second session, for hearing the replies of the foreign delegates to Hughes's proposal, came on Tuesday (the opening session had been on Saturday). As I look back upon it now, that date was a little early for the best effect. Not quite enough time had elapsed to get the full response from the peoples of the world, as distinct from their governments. The governments were still a little dazed, and the foreign delegates had not fully recovered from the bewilderment into which Hughes's plan had thrown them. There had not yet been time for the full effect of what American politicians mean when they speak of "hearing from the grass-roots." The point is not material and I mention it merely to explain what was the exact atmosphere of the second session.

The beginning was brisk. The gavel sounded. Hughes arose. "Gentlemen," he said. He spoke slowly and with the composure of success. There were a few words about formal matters of procedure, committees, and the like.

"Then," so my notes record, "Hughes kicked the ball off again." He said:

> It will now be in order for the Conference to listen to such discussion as may be desired with respect to the proposals which have been submitted on behalf of the American Government.

II

Balfour was the first to reply. It was in what he would say in behalf of Great Britain that we felt the most consuming interest. It was Great Britain's relation to the world that would be most affected by the Hughes plan.

I am satisfied now that the notes I made at the moment were not just to Balfour. They reflected a quality in his manner which was a little restrained, a little hesitant, a little lacking in spontaneous naturalness. I could understand the explanation for it later; but at the time, it was a little chilling, and my notes reflect that impression. Another thing that added to this same impression of hesitancy is the fact, which I later observed in all Mr. Balfour's speeches, that he has a trick of feeling for the right word, and even of trying one word, dismissing it, and trying another. An American woman of much insight said that Mr. Balfour in his speeches chooses his words like a man mak-

ing change, who repeatedly draws one coin from his pocket, and then puts it back and draws out another.

I spoke of Balfour looking a little tired, and he was that, for he, like all the British and the Japanese as well, had been working under pressure during the seventy-two hours since Saturday. But in the rest of my description of the effect that Balfour's personality made at the moment, I went somewhat afield, and in a direction away from fairness to him. My notes read:

> Mr. Balfour is a difficult figure to make clear to Americans. We have no one quite like him; no one to compare him with. He is a parliamentarian rather than a great leader. He is more prone to intellectual gymnastics than to getting into a sweat about anything. An English author said of him: "He never once has felt the call of the future nor experienced a genuine desire to leave the world better than he found it." Balfour is a kind of intellectual lawyer for Lloyd George. He doesn't make British policy, nor even lead it. He takes it from Lloyd George.

While I repeat these hasty notes in all their unsympathetic coldness, I repeat them only because it is my intention that a part of such value as this book shall have, is that it shall reproduce some of the impressions of the moment. But in these present words, which I add on the day the Conference closed, I cannot make too emphatic the fact that these early notes on Mr.

Balfour's personality, and the impression he made, do him an injustice. I was ardent for the Hughes plan; and Mr. Balfour, on that day when he was to give the British answer, seemed to lack ardour, seemed to halt and hesitate. I learned the explanation later. The fact is that Mr. Balfour was in his heart more ardent for the Hughes plan than circumstances permitted him to show; and as the Conference developed he showed an unmistakable and most engaging warmth of feeling for this adventure in altruism. By the same token, as the Conference developed through later weeks, the audience came to have a feeling of warm affection for Mr. Balfour. In a sense, each day, when Balfour entered the room, you felt that the play had begun. Hughes, of course, was always the dominant figure; but you thought of him as a part of the permanent setting, like the scenery and the lights. Moreover, Hughes, by the nature of his position, had to be concentrated on the course of business. For Balfour, the audience and the Conference came to have a special feeling of affection and veneration.

The fact is, all existing estimates of Mr. Balfour, especially those made by literary men and women in his own country, must be revised in the light of what we know about Balfour at the close of the Washington Conference. The es-

timates of his contemporaries has almost universally laid emphasis on his lack of warm feeling, on his intellectual detachment. They point out his skill with words; they speak of him as a dextrous controversialist. I have heard an Englishman tell how Chamberlain used to try, but never succeeded, to corner Balfour into a yes-or-no answer on the question whether free trade is good or is not good. Some of these things that British writers say about Balfour are quoted elsewhere in this chapter. (Some of them are quoted below in a passage I have taken from another writer's description of Balfour on this day of the Conference.) Another typical one came from his close friend, the late Alfred Lyttleton, who once said he could imagine "no intellectual dilemma from which Arthur Balfour could not emerge in triumph."

This sort of thing—and contemporary writing about Balfour in England is full of it—does not give you a picture of a man toward whom you could feel very sympathetic. It is more nearly the picture of a man for whom you would be more likely to feel some repellence. I had read most of these contemporary English writers on Balfour, and talked with many of them; and this experience coloured somewhat my initial impression of him at the Conference.

Balfour's attitude toward the spiritual world,

and the universe generally, has been described as that of one who regards death as no more than passing through a door into another existence, and who, bearing this in mind, is not disposed to get much excited over anything so trivial, relative to the universe as a whole, as the things that most of us get into a sweat about. Balfour's attitude about matters that excite others greatly has been described as that of a man whose steady intellectual and temperamental attitude is that of a man who always reflects, "what will it all matter a thousand years from now?"

All these characterizations must be true. There are too many of them, and they point too universally in the same direction, for their evidence to be doubted. And I do not mean to say that Mr. Balfour lost his intellectual dexterity through anything that happened at the Washington Conference. He has it yet, and on occasion can make use of it. Also, it remains a fact that diplomacy is Mr. Balfour's vocation, and that he practises it with all the available tools. When graciousness is the tool required, Balfour can supply it. But when subtlety is called for, or cold strength, Balfour can supply that, too. In some passages he had with one of the French delegates at this Conference, M. Sarraut, Balfour in fact did call upon these colder qualities of his.

But the point I wish to make is that never again can it be said that Balfour is a man who has never had any warm passion for the betterment of things in this world. To Balfour, the Hughes plan was a thing of inspiration, and he reacted to it with inspiration of his own. He looked upon the need of success for this plan, and worked to bring it to success, with a spirit that was not less than passionate. In any future estimates of Mr. Balfour that aim to be complete, it must be recorded that at the Washington Conference he had an experience of exalted feeling which was unlike anything in his previous career, assuming the contemporary English writers are to be taken as understanding fully the Balfour of the past.

And yet, in so far as these hurried notes of my own, from which I have quoted and from which I shall quote again in a moment—in so far as they show an unsympathetic coldness, there was some justification in the Balfour of the moment. For reasons inherent in the occasion, he was labouring under restraints which came from outside himself and for which he had little liking.

As to the speech which Balfour now proceeded to make, there is a striking similarity between the impression made on myself, and the impression made on another of the correspondents,

who wrote for the Baltimore *Sun*. The audience was substantially identical with those who had sat in the same seats on the opening day and been electrified by the speech of Hughes. They had come expecting a repetition of the same thrill. This state of anticipation, and the feeling of failure to live up to it as Balfour got under way, cannot be pictured better than by quoting from the Baltimore *Sun's* account:

> What will he say? was the anticipatory thought of everyone. . . .
>
> In black frock coat and black tie, Mr. Balfour looks like an elderly parson of some evangelical denomination. If there is anything Machiavellian in his character it is not reflected in his appearance. The only things about him that suggest his greatness are his height, his massive head and his eyes. Those eyes have that "queer" look which certain religionists say betokens absorption in the affairs of another world. They make him appear to be thinking of something other than that which he is saying. He has been variously described. A gentleman. A philosopher. A disillusioned cynic. The finest intellect in England. The master-mind of the British Foreign Office. An inbred conservative with an instinctive shrinking from democracy as it has developed in recent years. Only the other day one of the keenest of British editors said of him, with reference to his visit to Washington, that "he has all the necessary dignity and no man can say 'No' more convincingly; but for any positive task, for any work of construction, for any advance in the world's mechanism of action, is there any mind so hopeless? We

seem to have only two men whom we can use alternately, Mr. Lloyd George to act, Mr. Balfour to negate. At Washington, however, it will be fatal to rely on negations."

How would such a man react to the challenge delivered by Secretary Hughes on Saturday? Would his conservative instincts be appalled by the radical nature of the American proposals? Would his sense of diplomatic propriety be outraged by this bold attempt of shirt-sleeve diplomats openly to arrive at open covenants? Would he say "no" in such a persuasive way that he would seem to be answering "yes"? . . .

Or had he, perchance, been stirred out of his habitual currents of thought by the agonies of a war-wearied world? Had that exceptional intellect of his brought him to the point of believing that the best interests of Britain would be best served by serving best the interests of the world? . . .

Questions such as these were in the minds of many of those who crowded this flag-bedecked hall as the British statesman arose. And they received a queer answer. Verbally the Balfour reply was all that could be desired. It did pledge British aid in the carrying out of the American plan. It had in it no suggestion of ulterior purpose. It was whole-hearted. It even spoke with what must have been unusual enthusiasm, for Balfour, of this scheme "making idealism a practical proposition;" of it as one "that takes hold of the dreams which reformers, poets, publicists, even potentates, as we heard the other day, have from time to time put before mankind as the goal to which human endeavour should aspire."

It should have been superbly thrilling. I have no doubt that it will be thrilling to the millions that read it

through the world. But to the small audience that heard it, it was not. Mr. Balfour spoke rather haltingly. At times he stuttered. Ofttimes, before completing a sentence, he would repeat the first half of it as if groping in his mind for the remainder. Not infrequently it seemed as if he were deliberately trying to avoid the rounding off of a period, to avoid the appearance of being rhetorical. He was deliberate, deprecatory, deferential. He offered his suggestions with an effort of timidity. Speaking of his proposal for a further reduction in submarine tonnage, "our experts," he said, "at first glance, are inclined to think, perhaps, that"—so and so. That is a characteristic British trick. The master minds of Britain like to pose as dilettantes. It may be clever tactics in discussion, but it robs the speaker of that forthright response which straightforward, vigorous utterance compels. Mr. Balfour might easily have received an ovation from his audience this morning. Not that he cares about it, but his words deserved one. As it was, he received a decorous amount of applause.

This Baltimore *Sun* picture of Balfour's answer, and of the reception the audience gave his speech, is corroborated by my own notes, which say:

Balfour began with a hesitating manner. In the beginning he has the air of meaning to hedge a little; however, that may turn out to be wrong. He begins with a good deal of "high talk" about the desirability of reduction—just the sort of thing which Hughes avoided on Saturday. The audience is very silent and attentive. When, speaking of the Hughes proposal, he said, "the secret was ad-

mirably kept," the audience laughed. What Hughes did on Saturday was very disconcerting to the British. It is sportsmanlike of Balfour to be good-humored about it. Balfour, speaking of Hughes's Saturday speech, uses the words "when the blow fell."[1] But the audience wants to know what Balfour is going to say about it. He keeps on with generalities. But he makes out a good case for Great Britain's naval needs. The audience feels an appealing quality in him and warms up to him a little. When Balfour said of the Hughes plan, "It makes idealism a practical proposition," the audience applauded. Nevertheless, Balfour's speech could not avoid having a little of the color of cautious hedging. When he spoke of "whole-hearted coöperation" and the like, the audience applauded. But there could not help being disappointment at Balfour's failing to get down to facts and figures, as Hughes did on Saturday. The audience wanted an answer to "do you or don't you accept it?" and Balfour couldn't give that. Apparently he had not the authority. He closed by reading a telegram from Lloyd George. This telegram was, after all, mere courteous praise for Harding's and Hughes's speeches. The audience applauded the telegram fairly heartily. The end of Balfour's speech was disappointing. The audience wanted definiteness, and Balfour wasn't empowered to give it. The audience wanted a Hughes speech, and Balfour is not a Hughes.

[1] When Balfour spoke of the "secret" and of "the blow," he was reflecting the dazed astonishment with which he and all the British had received Hughes's opening speech. One of the yarns that got into the papers at the time was to the effect that Hughes had showed his speech to Balfour in advance. That would have been the old way and the usual way. This fiction got about chiefly because it was known that Hughes and Balfour had had a talk the night before the opening session. Actually, while Hughes told Balfour the general course that was to be pursued as regards various formalities, all that he said about his own speech was, "I propose to speak for thirty or thirty-five minutes; but I shall not tell you what I propose to say."

Such was the impression Balfour's speech made at the moment. If you search for the secret of this disappointing quality in it, you will find it in Lloyd George's telegram at the end. Balfour wanted to respond to Hughes's speech in the spirit in which it had been made. Under other circumstances, Balfour might have made this as great a day as Hughes had made the first. Balfour believed in the Hughes idea. He thinks that the limitation of armament and the prevention of war is the only salvation of the world. I learned this later. But Balfour, as the representative of the British Government, could not say the thing that Balfour the man felt. At least he could not say it so soon. He could not commit the British Government further than Lloyd George was willing to go. And it was apparent Lloyd George had not made up his mind yet. There had not been time. They were all still a little dazed from the sweeping swiftness of what Hughes had done on Saturday. Their naval experts had not yet been able to tabulate fully what would be the effect on their own navy;[1] and the British Govern-

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1 There is, conceivably, an additional theory as to why the British may have been cautious as yet about giving complete assent to the Hughes plan. This was only the third day of the Conference. Nothing had yet been done about the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. The theory was held by some that the British meant to withhold their assent to the armament plan that was so near to our hearts, until we should show willingness to join them in setting up a substitute for the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. It is true that almost immediately after this, the An-

ment altogether had not been able to get far enough toward the bottom of it to be able to do anything more than assent guardedly and with qualifications. The telegram which Lloyd George had sent, and with which Balfour ended his speech, was an accurate expression of the as yet uncrystallized state of their minds:

British government have followed proceedings at opening session of Conference with profound appreciation and whole-heartedly endorse your opinion that speeches made by President Harding and Secretary of State Hughes were bold and statesmanlike utterances pregnant with infinite possibilities. Nothing could occur better for the

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glo-Japanese Alliance was brought up, the four-power treaty in substitution for it was devised, and we as well as the others signed it. All this happened a considerable time before Great Britain signed the naval limitation treaty. Whether the British were consciously using their assent to the Hughes plan for trading purposes, is a question of motive as to which the facts are wholly within their own hearts. It is a difficult thing for an outsider to be certain about. Possibly a question of this sort about motives ought not even to be expressed without some justification more concrete than such merely circumstantial evidence as the sequence of events. More will be said about this in the chapter that deals with the four-power treaty.

If the British were hesitant about limiting their navy until they should have a dependable understanding with the United States about the Far East, no one can blame them. The United States has, and has justly, a reputation for instability in international affairs. We change our policy about such important things as the Panama Canal with an impulsive suddenness that makes the Foreign Offices of other governments a little jumpy about us. They worry, not about our good faith, but about our inexperience, which has caused us to fail to develop a mature sense of responsibility about important international affairs. Great Britain, with her fleet, and her Anglo-Japanese Alliance, had some assurance of stability in the Far East; and she could not be expected to be willing to make any change in respect to either her fleet or her Alliance, until she should be assured of something equally stabilizing from us. She might prefer the understanding with us, to what she had; but considering our reputation, and what our Senate occasionally does to treaties, it need be neither surprising nor wounding to our pride if she wanted to wait to see what arrangement we might be willing to enter, and be relied on to live up to.

ultimate success of the Conference. Please convey to both our most sincere congratulations.

Nevertheless, the audience, in spite of the vaguely disappointing feeling that Balfour had not come up to their emotional expectations, got the idea that Great Britain was sympathetic to the plan and that the bulk of it would go through. The particular words in Balfour's speech which the audience seized upon were "We agree with it, in spirit and in principle." The audience caught the first words, "We agree with it"—and in a burst of applauding appreciation missed the later slightly modifying phrase. It was just as well. Great Britain believed in the plan and was merely prevented by the shortness of time, which had been too brief for thorough examination of it, from giving unqualified assent to all its details.

It was Kato's turn next. He spoke in the Japanese tongue, and the audience waited breathlessly for the translation. The interpreter turned out to be an emotional person, much more addicted to an oratorical manner than Kato himself is. When he came to the crucial words of the Japanese pronouncement, he raised his voice and swung his arms:

Japan cannot remain unmoved by the high aims which have actuated the American project. Gladly accepting,

therefore, the plan in principle, Japan is ready to proceed with determination to a sweeping reduction in her naval armament.

The audience interpreted this as heartily sympathetic and cheered it. Brief speeches followed from the spokesmen of Italy and France,[1] and the session closed.

II

The sum of the history of the Conference so far was that Hughes had announced his plan for a naval holiday and for mutual scrapping of capital ships, that in the space of three days the world in general had given it whole-hearted support, and that officially the two nations other than the United States that were most affected, Great Britain and Japan, had accepted it in principle, reserving the details for future discussion.

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1 Briand's response for France was merely one of sympathy for the Hughes plan and the purposes of the Conference, expressed in general terms. It did not contain any hint of the rôle France subsequently took.

CHAPTER IV

FRANCE SAYS "NO"

THE Conference was now fully launched and under way. By that act it ceased to be the simple, easily followed drama of a single forum within the four walls of one room. The members split up into a number of committees who met in closed rooms, or conferred still more privately, in the hotels and private houses where the delegations were located. From any one of these quarters the drama of the day might spring up. It was like the earlier part of the war in Europe, when the crisis of the day might arise on any one of the many far-spread fronts. Indeed, as between the war and the Conference, it was the latter that had the greater scope. The Conference was by no means confined to the range of the delegates and committees in their daily coming and going in Washington. It spread out over all the earth. It was in London that the most menacing crisis of the entire twelve weeks arose, in the shape of Earl Curzon's mordant protest against the refusal of the French to "come along" in the matter of land arma-

ment. At least one of the major crises was settled by a cablegram from Paris. Several of the crises came from Tokio and one minor one from Italy. In its world-wide scope, in the strength of the forces it involved, and in the quality of the personalities that played a part, it is not too much to say it was a majestic drama.

To follow this complex, sprawling drama, the simpler way would be to follow out to the end the one thing that had occupied the first two plenary sessions, and observe just what happened from day to day about the plan for limiting naval armament. That would have been the natural course for the Conference to take. But one small exigency determined a different order. The French Premier, M. Briand, was to be in Washington but a brief time, and the thing that he and France were primarily interested in was not naval armament but the French Army. To accommodate Briand, therefore, the third plenary session stepped aside for a time, dropping naval armament to take up land armament. In this, as in several other respects, the departure by the Conference from what would have been a more normal procedure, made it less simple to follow, and accounts for the lack of understanding and the falling-off in intensity of popular interest, which caused several of the later weeks to seem in the nature of anti-climax. A famous

American humourist, Mr. Ring Lardner, who was in Washington on the opening morning, and who saw and shared our lofty exaltation over what Hughes had done that day, remarked, with a professional writer's sense of dramatic sequence, "I'm going home. This is going to be a bum show. They've let the hero kill the villain in the first act."

However, the best way to give the reader the clearest understanding of the Conference as a whole is to follow the order in which the work was done, and take up the matter of limitation of armament on land, and what Briand did to that proposal.

The French delegates were sensitive about their army. They had the air of a man with a chip on his shoulder. More accurately, they seemed to feel on the defensive. They seemed to sense an atmosphere of accusation against them, not only at the Conference, but throughout the world. They were the only nation among the Allies that was still maintaining a large army. Great Britain, America, and Italy had reduced theirs to a peace-time minimum. The Italians seemed to be in an especially accusatory frame of mind about France's maintaining a great army long after Italy had reduced hers to two hundred thousand. The Italians felt also that the French Government was preventing

the economic restoration of Europe, for which the Italians are particularly eager. Some of the minor members of the Italian delegation, who used to pour their accusations into the ears of American observers, said not only that Italy was troubled by France retaining her army, but also that Italy's other neighbour on the east, Jugoslavia, was maintaining a disproportionately large army. They seemed to imply that France's maintenance of a large army was causing some of the other nations, either by force of example, or in a more direct way, to do the same. There was apprehension that the French Government might have the ambition, by keeping a large army herself, and by some form of understanding with some smaller nations, to become a great military power which should dominate the continent of Europe. There was strong feeling between the Italians and the French on this point. Some of the leaders of both the Italian and French delegations at Washington tried to keep the row within the family, so to speak, but it was there nevertheless. They took pains to fraternize publicly at a dedication of a local Dante monument that happened to occur at the time, and in other ways made earnest attempts to avoid the public appearance of disagreement. But at the secret sessions, when nobody was looking, the Italians

talked pretty pointedly to the French about the need of doing something about land armament, and the French replied with equal sharpness.

It was this suppressed acerbity of feeling between the Italians and the French that led to one of the minor episodes of the Conference, an episode which seems to have had tragic consequences in Italy, but which, at Washington, seemed a little funny. The episode centred about a despatch sent from the Conference by a French journalist to Paris, which apparently was telegraphed from Paris to London and finally to Milan. The despatch, in the final form in which it appeared in the Italian papers, was to the effect that in one of the secret sessions of the Conference in which land armament was treated, M. Briand had made an uncomplimentary reference to the Italian Army, and that the Italian delegate had failed to reply in the manner which on such occasions seems to be demanded by the European code of national pride. The result of the publication in the Italian newspapers was said to have been several attacks upon French consuls and the death of some persons in putting down the riots. The news of the riots and their cause was cabled to America, and was of such consequence that Hughes issued a formal communiqué on the subject, saying that he himself had been present at the session of the

Conference, that Briand had uttered no words derogatory to the Italian Army, and that nothing to give grounds for the Italian riots had occurred within the Conference room. Thereupon we heard the explanation. In fact, we heard two explanations. One, made public a little later on, was merely to the effect that Mr. Balfour had made a speech in favour of further disarmament on land, but that M. Briand, in replying, had addressed himself to the Italian delegate, and had made forceful gestures in the latter's direction, whereupon Signor Schanzer told M. Briand he should address himself to Mr. Balfour as the author of the proposal. There is another explanation of the episode, which may or may not be as authoritative as the one first published, but which at least has interest and verisimilitude, and may be published here, it is hoped, without causing sudden or unnecessary violence to anybody in Europe. The explanation is to the effect that M. Briand, in entire innocence and speaking in French, conceded that the Italian Army was in process of being reduced. and in doing so used a French phrase of which the English equivalent is "a state of decomposition." What he meant, of course, was "demobilization." But the other word was the one that got into circulation; and somewhere in its passage through the French reporter's mind, or

in the process of translation from French to English and thence to Italian, it was made to seem that Briand had said what an American would mean by saying in a slang way that something is "putrid."

II

It was not only from the Italians that the French had this sense of being under accusation. They had it also from the British, and in a less concrete way, from the Americans. The British felt that one of the purposes of France in keeping her army standing was to be able, if necessary or expedient, to march, or to threaten to march, into Germany and on to Berlin, in order to force Germany to pay the reparations. In fact, at one time or another, various spokesmen reflecting the French point of view, had made public statements of this purpose. The British felt that the reparations fixed against Germany by the Paris Conference were too large and must be readjusted, and felt that any military action to make Germany pay more than she was able would postpone the recovery of Europe from its economic and political chaos. Also the British seem to have felt that some of the things France was doing with her army in Asia were seriously undesirable. It was con-

sidered, too, that the amount of money France was spending in maintaining her army was postponing the economic recovery of herself and the rest of the world. The British knew, also, that the French wanted to press them into a treaty covering various matters in Europe and Asia, and suspected that France's continued maintenance of a large army was meant as one of several leverages designed to make Great Britain come to terms.[1]

The feeling of tension between the British and the French at the Conference was unmistakable. On the day the British delegation arrived in Washington, in greeting one of the British officials, I made a remark in the spirit of the occasion to the effect that this was going to be "a conference of friends." "I should like to think so," my acquaintance replied with an air of sincere regret, "but do you really think that the French have a friendly disposition toward us?" His doubt was well justified, as we all learned by the time the Conference was a month old. The feeling of irritation on the part of the

[1] I do not mean to imply, of course, that England felt France's army to be directed at her (although Mr. Balfour, later on, did not hesitate to say that France's proposed submarine navy could only be understood as being directed at Great Britain). But France's maintenance of a large army was part of a general European policy on the part of France, which policy was repugnant to Great Britain; and Great Britain could only induce France to abandon that policy by consenting to make the treaty of alliance and guarantee which France wanted from her.

French against the British showed itself in a hundred ways, many of them more petty than important; and it centred not only about the French Army, but about several other issues.

As regards the Americans, also, the French had the feeling of a man who is under the shadow of a silent accusation. They realized that their maintaining so large an army was against the spirit that President Harding was trying to bring into the world. They had the uneasy feeling that their insistence on a large army would be looked upon as a menace to the success of the Conference. They knew that they were probably being regarded in many American quarters as following a rôle which, to express it in the mildest way, was failing to be helpful to the spirit of the event.[1]

For all these broader reasons I have mentioned, in addition to M. Briand's specific wish to return to Paris, the French were eager to

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1 In justice to Hughes and Harding, and America, I should add here that if France had confined her obstructions to the success of the Conference to the matter of her army merely, America would have had no resentment. There was the most generous disposition to make allowances for France's position, and also for M. Briand's personal political necessities at home, for we felt that he was under pressure from army men and imperialists and militaristic elements among the politicians of his own country. We were ready to overlook his refusal to join in a limitation of armies. The reception given to Briand's speech defending France's military policy, so far as America was concerned, was not only not unfriendly, but actually sympathetic. But after Briand had gone back to France, the French delegation did several things about naval armament which were seriously disconcerting. All this will appear in detail later on.

have their say about their army. Briand was anxious, as we would say, to "get it off his chest," and Hughes courteously arranged the programme to give him the earliest available opportunity.

That opportunity could not be had in either the first or the second plenary session. At the opening session nothing had been said or done about land armament. It was all about naval armament. No allusion had been made to the French Army or any other army. The second plenary session, as I have recited, was devoted to the replies by the other governments to the Hughes proposals. In those replies there was no allusion to the French Army until Briand made it himself. (At least, there was no such allusion that we could recognize, until, a few days later, one of the French newspaper men picked out a sentence from what Balfour had said, and in the state of excessive suspicion in which the French were, found in it a subtle thrust. Mr. Balfour had merely said that the Hughes plan "did not touch a question which every man coming from Europe must feel to be a question of immense and almost paramount importance—I mean the heavy burden of land armament; that is left on one side, to be dealt with by other schemes and in other ways." In that sentence, the French newspaper man found

material for half a column of wounded sensitiveness.[1])

It was Briand himself who first brought the question of the French Army into the Conference, and brought it in the shape of a specific request for permission to state his case adequately. He wanted to state it publicly, in a plenary session. On the second day, in giving France's reply to the Hughes naval plan, Briand made gracious reference to the plan and to the Conference as a whole, and closed with this request:

Gentlemen, when it comes on the Agenda, as it will inevitably come, to the question of land armament, a question particularly delicate for France, as you are all aware, we have no intention to eschew this. We shall answer your appeal, fully conscious that this is a question of a grave and serious nature for us. The question will be raised—it has been raised, gentlemen, and if there is a country that desires, that demands, that the question of land armaments should be raised, it is France.[2] It will

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1 Perhaps I should quote some of what this French writer—it was M. Stephane Lausanne, editor of the Paris *Matin*—actually said. After quoting the sentence from Mr. Balfour's speech, which I have reproduced above, M. Lausanne wrote: "There were many flowers in Mr. Balfour's address on Monday and a little stone. The flowers were all for the shoulders of Secretary Hughes and the little stone was for the garden of Premier Briand. A sweet note of reproach was noticeable in Mr. Balfour's voice when he threw his stone. He seemed to say: 'Are we going to be alone to mount the stage? Will these nations having large armies remain in the orchestra stalls?' Naturally, Premier Briand picked up the stone at once. . . ."

2 This statement of Briand's, made for public consumption, needs to be qualified a little before it can be accepted as completely accurate. Briand did not want the Conference to take up the question of land

come in due time before the Conference, and I hope that I shall enjoy the opportunity, and that I shall be able to state publicly in one of the meetings of this Conference what the position of France is, so that the United States and the world may fully know; and when I have tried to prove this, when you have listened to this demonstration, I am quite sure that you will be convinced, gentlemen, that France, after the necessities of safety and life have been adequately secured, harbours no thought of disturbing the peace of the world.

To this request, Hughes replied by saying, as he closed the session:

I have no doubt that I express the wish of the Conference that at an opportune time M. Briand will enjoy the opportunity of presenting to the Conference most fully the views of France with regard to the subject of land armament, which we must discuss.

The opportune time came at the earliest possible moment, six days later, at the third of the plenary sessions.

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armament. On the contrary, he resisted it. This was made clear later on, in one of the closed sessions. Probably an adequate statement of Briand's position would say that his first wish was to get from America and Great Britain the treaty of guarantee which Wilson had promised France. In case he should get that, and in that case only, Briand would have been willing that the Conference should take up the question of land armament. But failing that—and Briand quickly saw that was impossible—his wish was to get for France a kind of exemption and exculpation. He wanted that France should be permitted to keep her army, and that the Conference should say as little about land armament as possible; for the Conference could not possibly talk about land armament at all without pointing a reproachful finger at France. And Briand was most eager to get back to France without reproach.

III

To pass on to the reader, so far as possible, the impression he might have got if he had actually sat in the hall himself, and listened to Briand's speech, there is no more available device than to reproduce here the notes I wrote down myself. Later on I shall treat the substance of the speech with greater fullness. But from the point of view of the audience, there was more to this occasion than the substance of the speech. It was a chance to listen to one of the great orators of the world. As I wrote in my opening notes:

Before the opening there was curiosity and expectation almost equal to that of the first day's session. This was based chiefly on the anticipation of hearing M. Briand's oratory. His fame as a speaker has come to Washington from France. Also on one of the preceding days it fell in M. Briand's way to make a brief and unimportant speech, which was, nevertheless, enough to give Washington a hint of what Briand can do when he really gets under way. This is the day when France and Briand "have their say." Briand is going to talk about land armament and about France's necessity for a big army. All this, of course, is written while the doors are opening and the crowds are coming in. It may be possible for Briand's personal power to turn the occasion into something of world importance. Hardly anything could exceed the spirit of expectation in the audience.

From this description of the spirit of anticipation in the audience, my notes go on. I print them as they stand, with the idea of reproducing the impression of the actual moment:

There is a prolonged period of photograph-taking under a queer, artificial light. In the strange light the delegates look for the most part worn and tired, but Hughes is fresh. He has the stimulant of enormous success. He has it in him to make a joke; he says that whatever may be done about armament, there is to be, apparently, no limitation on photograph taking.

Now Hughes plunges straight into the subject of land armament. He says America has little concern with it. To-day, he says, our regular establishment is about 160,000. But, he says, he realizes that other countries are differently situated. Hughes is making a graceful and friendly opening for Briand to begin. Every disposition is apparent to give Briand the best atmosphere and the best "send-off" possible.[1] Now Hughes introduces Briand.

Briand begins slowly and solemnly. He has wonderful command of every detail of the art of public oratory.

Let us pay tribute to this man. He was born to give passionate expression to burning causes. There is a thrill for the audience every time he says the words "La France." It must be that two thirds of the audience do not understand French, but hardly an eye fails to follow Briand's gesture, and never an ear misses a sound of his

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[1] These, bear in mind, are impressions written down on the instant. I call attention to them in order to show that Hughes and America had only the most friendly disposition toward France. The initial animus of what happened later about the Hughes plan for naval limitation came not from America but from France.

voice. There is intense attention. He tells the familiar story of how France is situated and repeats the familiar argument why France cannot disarm but must continue to fear and to be prepared. He describes the instability of Europe.

When the interpreter begins the first instalment of Briand's speech, you realize how great is the handicap of language that Briand must work under. The interpreter has none of Briand's enormous magnetism. His voice has no resonance and his gestures are of necessity merely mechanically imitative. You feel sorry for Briand that his power must be chained by this handicap.

Briand is truly the real thing in the way of an orator. Nothing we have in America can approach him. The music and resonance of his voice and the fire of his manner give obvious thrills to those large sections of the audience who don't understand a word he is saying.

He is one of those whom Heaven especially endowed for oratory, for moving masses of men. He is dramatic, inspiring. My friend Admiral Tsai of the Chinese delegation tells me that M. Briand reminds him very much of a famous actor and operatic performer in China, a celebrated figure whose stage name is Tsiao Chiaou Tien, meaning, in the flowery language of China, "The-Little-Bringer-Down-of-Heaven." On the other side of me an irreverent American reporter remarks that Briand "would certainly be a hell-raiser on the stump" in an American political campaign. Between these two singularly related methods of describing him, the reader will probably get some notion of Briand's quality.[1]

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1 Briand was decidedly the most striking of the French delegates. To one who was merely an observer, he seemed much the biggest man among them. He was not so self-centered a man as Viviani. Briand seemed bigger, more like a man who had come to the top easily, by virtue of natural force. He took the world in a more easy-going stride.

Briand makes a mistake, from an oratorical point of view, in reading these extracts from books by Ludendorff. These German books that still talk war are not convincing to Americans. Briand can hardly persuade America that the German people have not had a stomachful of war. The German war-lords may still talk war, but America cannot be convinced it is a real menace. Briand would do better to stick to his own oratory. It is a waste to spend that splendid voice in reading dull extracts from books. For the moment, at least, Briand has lost his momentum.

The audience follows him with respectful attention, but not, for the moment, with thrills. Hughes listens to Briand with something of the air of rehearsing his college French. Mr. Philippe Millet, reporter for the *Petit Parisien,* who sits at my right and who has often heard Briand at his best in the French Chamber of Deputies, says he regards Briand as being in good form.

The difficulty of language is very much against the orator. It must be like talking to a mass meeting in a deaf-and-dumb asylum. It is only the comparatively small number who speak French that can look responsive or give applause.

At the conclusion of Briand's speech, Balfour arose.

I was told that Briand never prepared his speeches in advance, but merely made up his mind about the ideas he was going to put forth, and trusted to inspiration for the words. The inspiration never failed him, and he had the air of easy-going reliance on it. By the same token, he had a less exact mind than Balfour, one less trained in matching abstractions, edge to edge. You got the impression that Briand had never had to train himself in the intellectual refinements of controversies over abstractions. He trusted to his instinct for the heart of things, and to the rich force of his abounding personality. Of Briand's personal appearance, one American reporter wrote, "a swarthy, shaggy mountain bandit, dressed in clergyman's clothes salvaged from last year's loot of a missionary caravan." This characterization was made in a wholly friendly spirit. The reporters liked Briand. So did Washington and America generally. Briand's loss of his premiership was regretted by Americans familiar with him and with French politics.

He complimented Briand's speech, saying to the audience, "It has been your privilege, and mine, to listen to one of the great modern masters of oratory." Balfour spoke with great sympathy for the French point of view. Almost the greatest applause of the day came when Balfour assured Briand that the world would never leave France in moral isolation.

I noticed later that these impressions of mine about Briand's speech were practically the same as those of other American observers. I observed particularly that Mr. Stanley Reynolds, writing in the Baltimore *Sun,* expressed the same feeling that I had about Briand's reading from German authors, and wrote that all this sabre-rattling on the part of the German war-lords sounded hollow to Americans, and that Briand made a mistake to rest his argument so largely upon it.

The reaction of the bulk of the Americans in the room was tolerantly sympathetic to Briand. Most of them couldn't bring themselves to shiver over the German threat he described at such length; but, nevertheless, they were willing to concede that he and France might be shivering over it, might still be in a state of war-time psychology; and they were willing to make the most generous allowances for him. True, they realized, or, at least, they anticipated pretty surely, that the position Briand took would

make it impossible to bring about reduction of land armament by this Conference. That was a serious matter. It would make a big hole in the agenda. Not only that, but some other things on the agenda might be contingent on land armament. Briand's refusal to "come along" might turn out to be pretty embarrassing. Nevertheless, everybody was willing to make allowances. Generous and sympathetic tolerance toward Briand was the practically universal attitude of the audience.

Officially, it was much the same. Balfour, speaking for England, said that his country would never forget France. Schanzer, speaking for Italy, was a little cooler, but, nevertheless, expressed no recognizable displeasure over what Briand had done. One of the French newspaper men sitting by my side was nervous and apprehensive when Schanzer made his speech, lest he should, as this Frenchman expressed it, "spit out some poison" at Briand. But if Signor Schanzer had any such intention, he had been dissuaded. (Or, more probably, he may have felt that after Mr. Balfour had received M. Briand's speech with so much tolerance, he, as the Italian representative, could not seem to receive it disputatiously.)

Hughes's speech was much like Balfour's, full of friendly words for France.

The best summing up of the Briand speech, and its reception by Balfour and Hughes, is in a single sentence that Mr. H. G. Wells wrote:

> France has explained the terrors of her position, and the assembled delegates have said, "There! There!" to her as politely and soothingly as possible; but nobody really believes in the terrors of her position.

(I find myself writing as if it were very decent of Balfour and Hughes not to show offense at Briand for making the limitation of land armament impossible; and so it was. But if you should turn the situation around and put yourself in the position of France, you might feel that she was not called upon to be excessively grateful. France, although Briand did not mention it in his speech, was well known to be desirous of an agreement on the part of America and Great Britain to come to France's aid if she should be attacked ever again by Germany. It will be recalled that at the Paris Peace Conference, Wilson promised this guarantee to France; but the refusal of the American Senate to ratify prevented the fulfilment of the promise. It had been made so clear to the French that American public opinion would not sanction any such alliance that Briand did not even ask for it openly, but confined himself to explaining why France could not reduce her army. Looked at

from a point of view which includes this element of France's desire for a written guarantee from the United States and Britain, you might say, as one observer did say that day, as we were leaving the room, "Briand pleaded that France is afraid of Germany; and Balfour and Hughes assured him that if France ever were attacked, they would rush to her rescue with five hundred thousand words." [1])

Not only on the part of the audience and the officials and others within the Conference was there generous tolerance for Briand and a com-

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1 This is probably an appropriate place to express what I must express if I am candid, namely, my frank doubt whether the French statesmen really believe, themselves, what they say when they base their claim to the necessity of maintaining their present army on the theory that Germany may attack them in the near future. It may be they honestly fear Germany may attack them ten years from now, or in another generation; history certainly gives them abundant justification for such fear; and the French statesmen may reasonably hold the view that in order to keep their people sufficiently warlike and otherwise prepared against the time of danger, they must maintain the institution of conscription and a continuously standing army. But I don't think the French statesmen really fear a present danger from Germany. My judgment is that their motive in talking that way is to keep their own people docile to their policies, and to get sympathy from Americans and others. Whenever you have any private discussion at any length with any one expressing the French point of view, you find that he bases France's policy of maintaining her large army on the expectation of using it, or threatening to use it, to collect the German reparations; and also on the theory that by maintaining her army for the present she can the better force Great Britain to make an alliance with her. In saying this, I do not impute bad faith to Briand or other French orators who pictured France's danger. I think they have the self-hypnosis that is not infrequent with orators. They got into a state during the war, when the danger was real, such that now the flow of fears and tears starts itself automatically. As to another group of French politicians, the case is different. It can hardly be doubted that there is a school of politicians in France whose motive in maintaining a large army is to make France a dominating military power on the continent of Europe, and to maintain that position. The school that succeeded Briand in power includes some who are chargeable with this ambition.

plete overlooking of the fact that he had made it impossible for the Conference to deal with land armament. There was the same disposition throughout the American press generally. The American papers, the next day, were very nice to Briand. The New York *Tribune,* recognizing that only naval armament could now be considered by the Conference, said, good-naturedly, that "half a loaf is better than no bread," and even went further to say that we ought to consider the idea of giving France the guarantee she wanted. The Philadelphia *Ledger* completely endorsed Briand's position, saying: "Premier Briand has made his expected defense of the great French Army that is still in being. He makes it to a sympathetic world, to nations but recently at grips with the enemy who has been the dangerous neighbour of France. . . . France will keep her army. . . . With the decision the world must agree so long as the Ludendorffs and Von Hindenburgs are mouthing of past glories. . . ."

These are typical examples of American opinion about Briand's speech. Even when some sources of American opinion showed feeling over the fact that Briand had made it impossible for the Conference to handle land armament, others came to Briand's defense. In a despatch which I wrote from Washington, the

day after Briand's speech, with the purpose of making the situation clear to American readers, and which I quote as descriptive of the point of view held generally in Washington at the close of Briand's public speech, I said:

Properly understood, Briand's speech is not a cause for pessimism. More truly it is a cause for optimism in that it was the expression of a spirit of compromise within the Conference. To understand Briand's speech you must understand that he was talking primarily for France to hear rather than for the Conference. Briand is Premier of France and his hold on that office is precarious. In France, when a premier does or says something unpopular, he goes out of office automatically. For example, if the letter that President Harding wrote to Congress, asking for lower surtaxes, had been written by Briand to the French Chamber of Deputies, and if the Chamber of Deputies had done what our Congress did, namely, refused to follow Harding's leadership, then, Harding, if he were the Premier of France, would have gone out of office automatically and the leader of the opposition would have taken his place. Some of the foreign delegates to the Conference who followed this episode in Congress were puzzled to understand how it was that the day after that episode Mr. Harding was still in the White House. Briand, in his speech to the Conference, had to avoid saying anything that might have caused the present exigencies of French politics to vote him out of office before he could leave America.[1] That speech was what

[1] As we all know now, Briand actually lost his premiership in less than a month after he returned to France.

American politicians call "a leave to address the House" speech, or "a leave to print" speech. It was designed, as many speeches in Congress are designed, not to affect pending legislation, but to be read by the voters back home. Many of the other members of the Conference understood M. Briand's position perfectly, and, as politicians, sympathized with it. They were entirely willing to let him take a position which was practically a refusal to submit to limitation of armament on land. The concession that led M. Briand to make the speech he did is a sign of the success of the Conference, not of its failure. France expected Briand to get something big out of the Conference. She expected him to bring home a guarantee of support from Great Britain and the United States. It did not take Briand long to learn that he could not get that. Since he had to go home empty-handed, the Conference was quite willing he should be permitted to make the speech he did. It is true there is a good deal of feeling between the British and the French, and between the Italians and the French. Both these nations feel more resentment over M. Briand's speech than either of them had publicly uttered. There was gossip within the Conference rooms to the effect that when the Italian chief delegate replied to M. Briand's speech, it had been his intention to do some plain talking. But any bellicose intentions he may have had were made impossible by the generosity of the speech in which Mr. Balfour replied. Mr. Balfour was undoubtedly using the arts of diplomacy, and if he had expressed the true feelings of the British he would have talked with some heat.

The net of all this is that Briand by his speech had done very well for himself and for France.

As to America, whatever disappointment we felt over the fact that his attitude must cause a serious omission in the Conference programme was more than offset by generous and sympathetic understanding both of the position of his country and of his own personal position as a politican. As to Balfour, and Schanzer of Italy, whatever disappointment or resentment they may have felt, they had suppressed in a generous contribution toward a spirit of harmony. All in all, everything was all right. That the French observers at the Conference felt everything to be all right is proved by a despatch which a French correspondent, M. Marcel Ray, sent to the Paris *Petit Journal,* saying, among other things, that Briand had

> obtained all that he wished: the recognition by all the powers of the special position of France as regards land disarmament, a declaration of moral solidarity which puts the French people beyond the danger of isolation, and finally complete freedom of action permitting France to take care of her own interests in the measure she shall judge necessary. For the rest, the French programme is a programme of conciliation, of which the directing idea is to coöperate in all matters to the success of the Conference and to raise no difficulty which may halt its progress.

(Parenthetically, the reader should note that last sentence particularly. If the French dele-

gates had only lived up to the programme suggested in it, the story of the Conference would have been very different, and France would have come out of it with the good opinion of the world instead of that position of moral isolation which she hoped she had averted.)

Apparently—apparently, I say—the most dangerous reef in the programme of the Conference had been passed successfully—passed only at the expense of a good deal of skilled manœuvering and with the throwing overboard of an important part of the cargo, but passed successfully, nevertheless.

IV

I have said that apparently—and I have emphasized "apparently"—the rock of land armament in the course of the Conference had been passed successfully. For my emphasis of "apparently" there is good reason. I did not know it at the time—no one outside the delegates knew at the time—but a good deal more happened about land armament than I have so far recorded.

All that I have written so far is a description of what had been done in the open, of what Briand had said *publicly*, and what Balfour and

Schanzer had replied publicly. But just two days after that public session, in which Briand had pleaded France's need of a big army, and in which Balfour and Schanzer—especially Balfour—had replied so sympathetically, there was another session, held in secret, in which the tone was very different. Nobody except the delegates knew about it at the time—at least, nobody knew what had taken place in it.[1] That was kept from the newspapers and the public. At the end of the session, a formal communiqué was given out, marked "For the Press." That communiqué purported to describe and summarize what had taken place. It contained just ninety-four words.

Now I dislike to clutter up this narrative with so many quotations, but I really think I ought to reproduce that communiqué verbatim in order that the reader may observe, as he goes on, the distance there can be between an official communiqué, and what has actually taken place —how great a quantity of contention can be glossed over by the solemn, stiff-shirted verbiage of an official communiqué. Here is how that communiqué read:

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1 This is not literally accurate. Briand, who was indignant, and probably felt he had less to conceal than the others, gave out a portion of his remarks, very much expurgated in the direction of mildness, to the press. But nobody caught its significance, and no one outside had any knowledge at all of the bulk of what happened.

CONFERENCE ON THE LIMITATION OF ARMAMENT

(For the Press, November 23, 1921)

The Committee on the subject of the limitation of armament met at the Pan-American building at 10:30 this morning. All the members were present except Baron Shidehara and Signor Meda. After a general discussion of the subjects relating to land armament and new agencies of warfare, these were referred to the sub-committee consisting of the heads of the delegations with instructions to bring in an order of procedure with regard to these subjects and with power to appoint sub-committees to deal with the questions relating to poison gas, aircraft, and rules of international law.

Those ninety-four words were the sole official communication to the world of what happened in that secret session.[1] As a matter of fact, it had been one of the most important of all the sessions. Many thousands of words had been said by Balfour, by Briand, by Hughes, by Schanzer, by Root, by Lord Lee, by Lodge—and many of them were acrimonious.

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1 I ought not to lay so much emphasis on the failure of this communiqué to reveal all, or even any, of what had taken place, without adding that this sort of thing was comparatively infrequent. There were very few cases of such withholding of information. The Washington Conference was more open, much more open, probably, than any other similar gathering ever held. The informal meetings of the four heads of delegations that made the four-power treaty were completely secret. Also, many of the sub-committee meetings were secret; but as to the formal meetings of the Conference and of the two main committees, the practice, in nineteen cases out of twenty, was to give out prompt and adequate résumés of what had been said and done.

I now proceed to tell what happened at that closed session. I base it on the secret and, at the time, withheld minutes.

As I read those minutes closely, I am led strongly to the feeling that Mr. Hughes, in calling that session, had no anticipation of the turn it was going to take. (I say this, of course, wholly as a surmise.) I observe that Mr. Hughes's words in opening the session were (I quote them in indirect discourse, because that is the form in which the secret minutes were kept):

> The chairman then said that the committee had been convened to see what could be done with certain questions not yet taken up. The naval sub-committee was not yet ready to report, so he supposed the committee might take up such other questions as the members desired.

Whether Mr. Hughes was surprised, or in any degree dismayed by the turn the session took, most certainly M. Briand was. Briand entered the meeting quite happy and comfortable. He had, two days before, at the public session, made his speech about the necessities of France; and Mr. Balfour and Signor Schanzer had replied with what he was justified as believing was gracious compliance. (Certainly Balfour's reply had been one of seemingly gracious compliance; Schanzer's had been a little less markedly so, although that was the colour of

it.) Briand undoubtedly thought he had "gotten away with it." Everything that had happened, and everything that had been said at that public session, had justified him in thinking so. He came to this secret session the second day after, therefore, in a pleased and comfortable mood. His purpose was merely to say good-bye. He was leaving for Paris the following day, and he came to this session to make his formal adieux, and to introduce M. Viviani, who would be the head of the French delegation in his place.

After Mr. Hughes had opened the session in the words I have quoted, M. Briand was the first to speak. He confined himself to saying good-bye, and to thanking the other delegates for how nice they had been to him two days before in their speeches at the public session. He used words of strong and simple emotion. He said "how deep was his gratitude to his colleagues for the words spoken by them and addressed to France," two days before. He said that those generous words would set France right in quarters where she had been under suspicion; they would make things easier for him personally as premier of France. In gratitude for those words he would go back to France, and largely because of the harmony that had marked the public discussion two days before,

and the effect the gracious speeches of Balfour and Schanzer had made on the French people, he hoped to be able to make some progress toward reduction of France's army—he would probably be able to reduce the duration of military service by one half.

Then M. Briand introduced M. Viviani as his successor and repeated his adieux. He had every appearance of being under the impression that this session would call for nothing more from him.

In reply to these adieux, Mr. Hughes answered in a kindred spirit. It would be necessary to infer, from what Mr. Hughes said, that he had a real personal regard for Briand. He said that he, as well as all the other delegates, had "admired M. Briand's eloquent presentation of the case of France two days before, and had all felt a deep affection, which would remain with them permanently." He said that M. Briand's departure would be "a personal loss." Continuing in the same spirit, Mr. Hughes said—I quote from the official minutes:

> The memory of the plenary session two days before, and of his [M. Briand's] moving address would always remain with them, and whatever might be the work that they might subsequently perform, there was nothing whatever that would surpass the interest of that occasion. They thought they understood the situation in France;

certainly the opportunity had not been lacking of fairly judging it. France, they realized, was moved by a common desire to be freed from the burden of armament and at the same time to be assured of her own safety. She must now feel a sense of moral solidarity with friends who would never forget. On behalf of the American Government, he expressed America's . . . recognition of the lasting tie that united the two peoples, a tie that had never been stronger than it was at the moment.

Now this passage of words of good-will and personal appreciation between Hughes and Briand was undoubtedly sincere. It gave to the occasion an agreeable note of amity and harmony.

But that note was changed disconcertingly and abruptly by Mr. Balfour.

To understand what Mr. Balfour now proceeded to do, you must assume that since the public session two days before, when Briand had said that France could not limit her land armament and Balfour had replied sympathetically —you must assume, I say, that during the intervening forty-eight hours, Mr. Balfour had received some urgent cablegrams from his government in London. As I shall show in a little while, the British Government had been seriously disappointed, even aggrieved, at the French refusal to submit the size of her army to the consideration of the Conference. If Balfour

personally was willing to let it pass, the British Government was not. Although, naturally, I have no personal knowledge on the point, I think it must be taken for granted that Balfour had been instructed by his government not to let the matter of land armament drop, and that it was under the pressure of those instructions that he did what he now proceeded to do.

It seemed like a different Balfour who now spoke. Anybody who had heard the charming and gracious Mr. Balfour of the public session two days before, and who now follows Mr. Balfour's words through the present passages of this secret session, must concede that this diplomat has two distinct diplomatic manners to his bow, one of urbane and smiling graciousness for such occasions as are best served by that manner, and, on the other hand, what Americans call a "nasty wallop" for short-arm work whenever the occasion moves him to that manner. He rose with the air of wanting to get through with all these felicitations between M. Briand and Mr. Hughes. His opening words were of polite regret at Briand's going—he couldn't very well avoid saying that, but he didn't waste much time on it. Thereafter, the secret minutes recite:

> He rose . . . to raise a purely business question. . . . The subject of land armament was not regarded as settled. . . . He wished to know if it were pro-

posed to be raised at the present Conference. Although the question of land armaments as affecting France had been raised by Briand two days before, there was no doubt that there were other important subjects relating to land armaments which deserved consideration. He would like to know in what order it was proposed to take them up. He did not suppose they were regarded as settled by the speeches in public discussion.

Now this was just what Briand thought had been settled at the speeches in the public discussion. He had explained the reason France felt she could not reduce her army; and Balfour and Hughes and Schanzer had replied graciously, sympathetically, consolingly. They hadn't said in so many words that they would respect France's position and omit land armament from the agenda; but Briand unquestionably thought that was what those words of gracious sympathy had meant. That Briand should have felt shocked and outraged by this bringing up of the subject anew by Balfour can be readily understood. However, it was not Briand that had the next say. Schanzer was the next to speak. He backed up what Balfour said. He did it most aptly:

"The question of the limitation of [land] armament," Signor Schanzer said, "was considered of the highest importance in Italy. And moreover public opinion in other countries was agreed that something ought to be done re-

garding this matter. . . . It seemed necessary to state Italy's definite intention to approach this question practically, and as soon as possible. He felt that the committee should avoid giving to the world the impression that this Conference called to examine so important a question, had avoided the issue, or that it had sought to set aside indefinitely the solution of the problem. Such a course, he said, would create a very bad impression in Italy." [1]

Thereupon Briand came back at them. He said he knew what they were driving at. "One country, and one only, was under discussion—France. . . . The Conference had conceded that France's case was exceptional." With mordant irony he remarked that he hadn't heard any of them "offer to assume by a formal contract a share of the burdens and perils that had fallen to France's lot." (Briand was, of course, referring to the treaty of guarantee which France has always asked as the only thing that would make it safe for her to disarm—the treaty that Great Britain and President Wilson promised her, but were prevented from fulfilling by the Senate of the United States.) Since they

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[1] Here, as elsewhere, I wish to make clear that many of the statements I quote are merely a few words from addresses hundreds, or even thousands of words long. In thus detaching sentences from their contexts, it is always possible to be unfair. A different writer, making different selections, might be able to give a somewhat different colour to the whole transaction. I feel I should say this, although I have no doubt whatever about these quotations being accurately representative of the speakers' meanings. Any one sufficiently interested to read the whole or any of these speeches can find them in the official minutes—Senate Document No. 126; 67th Congress, 2nd Session.

did not offer to share France's dangers, Briand said, how could they presume to dictate to France how large an army she should have?

There was eloquent reproach, a bitter expression of his shocked surprise, at the turn the session had taken. Briand cried that

> the Conference had accepted the explanation that the delegate from France had presented in public session; this was his understanding, if the words that had been spoken had any meaning. . . .
>
> M. Briand desired to be clearly understood; while obliged to leave Washington, he did not wish to leave such an essential point in doubt. He was unwilling to risk that some day the peoples of the earth might be told that if the problem of the limitation of land armament had not been settled, it was because of the opposition of France.

There followed some pretty mordant speeches, as well as efforts from the milder-mannered among the delegates, and those less directly concerned, to inject harmony. There was some talk that even though France's stand made the actual reduction of armies impossible, nevertheless, the Conference might at least give the world the comfort of the expression of a "platonic aspiration" on the subject. Mr. Balfour told M. Briand very pointedly that "if he [Briand] said the question of land armament must not be discussed, he was pressing his argu-

ment too far." Briand, at a later point in the debate, protested almost passionately that it was intolerable that France should "be put in the position of appearing unwilling to follow the other governments in the path of disarmament." Lord Lee acidly remarked that

> It was in the power of any State to say what it liked about any subject, or to decline to discuss any subject. If that were a general right, it was certainly France's right; but he was inclined to think that that should not preclude other States from discussing what they wanted.[1]

M. Briand closed the session in the most pointed way. Once more, he reminded Great Britain and America of their unfulfilled promise. He said he "had received from the French Parliament a very explicit mandate; France might agree to any reduction of armament if her safety were guaranteed. If she were left to stand alone, she could agree to nothing. . . . For the others in the Conference, there were but two solutions: Either to confirm the existing situation and let it go at that, or else to say to France, 'We will join forces; here is our signature.'" M. Briand said it would give him the greatest satisfaction to hear these words, "here is our

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[1] All these quotations are quoted verbatim from the minutes, which, at this session, were kept in the awkward form of indirect discourse. It is an inexact and otherwise undesirable method of recording minutes.

signature," but he hadn't been able to hear them.[1] "If the peoples of the earth," M. Briand said, "were as eager as they claimed, to see land armament limited, their representatives in this Conference had only to say: 'A danger exists; we recognize it; we will share it with you shoulder to shoulder; here is our signature.'"

There, of course, Briand had them. Being shocked and made indignant by their raising in the secret session what Briand thought had been settled, and settled in his favour, by the public session two days before; being angry at their raising anew what he thought they had previously acquiesced in, Briand now blurted out the thing he had refrained from saying in the public session. He reproached them for their failure to make the treaty of guarantee to France, which France had been promised at the Paris Conference. To that, the others had no adequate answer.

Reading these minutes of the secret session gives a colour to the whole of what was done by the Conference on the subject of France and

1 It is hardly possible to read the record of these passages closely without coming to feel that as a contact between man and man, an encounter in which one man tries the force of his momentum against another's, Briand had the best of it and seemed the bigger man. Balfour was relying largely on irony and innuendo. Schanzer was rabbinically pedantic. Briand was like a force of nature, deeply moved by the wrongs of his people and by an outraged sense of fairness. On its merits, nothing can conceal the fact that France was putting an unovercomable obstacle in the path of an important part of the Conference' work. But as an encounter between human beings, Briand made the greater appeal to sympathy and admiration.

land armament, somewhat different from what would be understood if our knowledge were confined solely to what had been said at the public session.

This difference does not help France much. France had refused in the public session, and France refused in the secret session. France was responsible for preventing the Conference taking up the question of land armament. There can be no doubt of that. But at the secret session, France at least gave a humanly appealing reason for her refusal.

About this secret session the public knew nothing. The impression the public had of what had been done about France and land armament was the impression they had received from the public session, an impression of harmony and amity.

V

Such was the spirit and substance of the secret session that dealt with France and land armament. It got nowhere. In the end, they took the usual refuge of inconclusion; they referred the matter to the committee on programme and procedure.

So the matter of land armament disappeared from the agenda. The American delegates did not acknowledge, even in unofficial private talks,

that it was off. Repeatedly, during the succeeding weeks, when I asked if limitation of land armament was permanently off the agenda, the reply was that "nothing is to be regarded as off the agenda until the Conference is over." But we felt that consideration of land armament was off, all the same.

VI

The very next day the spotlight shifted to London with a suddenness that dazed the world. Out of the British Foreign Office, in the shape of a speech by Earl Curzon, in which he talked to the Washington Conference with as much directness as if he were sitting in the room, and with rather more frankness than any official member of the Conference could very well practise, came a long-range bomb. One of the correspondents, reading it in the morning papers, paraphrased a war-time communiqué, "heavy cannon-fire on the London front." Earl Curzon said:

I would like to utter one word of caution and to suggest certain conditions which still remain to be fulfilled. It is no use reducing armaments at sea if we are still to contemplate the piling up or accumulation of vast armaments on land. An example must not be set by one nation only, or even by two or three. It must be followed

in proportion to their position and their ability by all. It is not for Great Britain to accept or submit to sacrifices while others pass them by.

The most eloquent passage in Earl Curzon's speech, and the one that was most seized upon for comment, was one in which he described the Germany of the past, but in which the discriminating could infer him to be alluding to the possible France of the future, a France threatening to step into the shoes of Germany as a great military power on the continent of Europe. In this same passage Curzon also issued stern warning to France against the policy at which she had been hinting, with insinuating truculence, of using the sword to make Germany pay excessive reparations:

"The real strength and protection of France," Earl Curzon said, "does not consist in the strength of her arms, potent as they are. It does not consist in the inexhaustible spirit of her people. It does not consist even in the justice of her cause. It consists in the fact that the conscience of the world and the combined physical forces of the world—and in that I include the great powers of Europe and America—will not tolerate the reappearance in the heart of Europe of a great and dangerous power that was always rattling its sword in the scabbard as a menace to the peace of the world. We shall convert Germany into a peaceful member of the international court of Europe only if the great powers combine not merely

to enforce the treaty, but to make it clear that no policy of retaliation or revenge will be tolerated by them, and that they will assist Germany to play her part, provided she shows sincerity and good faith."

For a day, the attention of the world was turned on this speech of Earl Curzon. The effect of it was supplemented by an utterance in the same spirit, but more fiercely mordant, which came out at the same time from the British author, Mr. H. G. Wells, who was in Washington writing about the Conference. Mr. Wells was pretty savage about France. He said:

The French contribution to the Disarmament Conference is that France has not the slightest intention of disarming. . . . France proposed to scrap nothing. France does not know how to scrap. . . . The great feature of M. Briand's discourse was his pretense of the absolute unimportance of England in European affairs. France, for whom, as Mr. Balfour in a few words of infinite gentleness reminded M. Briand; France, for whom the British Empire lost a million dead—very nearly as many as France herself lost; France, to whose rescue from German attack came Britain, Russia and presently Italy and America; France, M. Briand declared, was alone in the world, friendless and terribly treated by Germany and Russia. And on the nonsensical assumption of French isolation, M. Briand unfolded a case that was either—I hesitate to consider which—and how shall I put that old alternative? —deficient in its estimate of reality, or else—just special pleading.

The plain fact of the case is that France is maintaining a vast army in the face of a disarmed world and she is preparing energetically for fresh warlike operations in Europe and for war under sea against Great Britain. . . .

I will confess that I am altogether perplexed by the behaviour of France at the present time. I do not understand what she believes she is doing in Europe, and I do not understand her position in this Conference. Why could she not have coöperated in this Conference instead of making it a scene of special pleading? I have already said that the French here seem to be more foreign than any other people and least in touch with the general feeling of the assembly. They seem to have come here as national advocates, as special pleaders, without any of that passionate desire to lay the foundations of a world settlement that certainly animates nearly every other delegation. They do not seem to understand how people here regard either the Conference or France. . . .

People here want to see Europe recuperating, and they are beginning to realize that the chief obstacle to a recuperating Europe is the obstinate French resolve to dominate the Continent, to revive and carry out the antiquated and impossible policy of Louis XIV, maintaining an ancient and intolerable quarrel, setting Pole against German and brewing mischief everywhere in order to divide and rule, instead of entering frankly into a European brotherhood. [1]

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[1] What I have said of the tolerance about France so far as America was concerned, is borne out by the fact that the violence of this utterance from Mr. Wells was generally, and, in some quarters, very pointedly deplored. The New York *Tribune* called it "furor Teutonicus" and said: "It is fortunate for France that Britain is not populated by H. G. Wellses; for it is perfectly clear that only the depressing minority of H. G. W.'s personality and views withholds him from leading a horde of internationalized Wellses straight on Paris, bundling the iniquitous Foch off to some convenient St. Helena and propagandizing

From this article by Mr. Wells, and from Earl Curzon's speech, we all knew now that a row was on between France and Great Britain. But for both a general and a specific reason, the Conference and America rather stood aside from it. As Mr. Wells admitted—and this was what the lawyers call an admission against the witness's own interest, for Mr. Wells wanted to keep this quarrel in the spotlight, on the theory that a brisk row and plain speaking might clear the air—"The Americans generally don't like this quarrel. . . . They would like to hear no more of it."

And America and the Conference made up their minds to hear no more of it. The Conference wanted to get on with naval armament. Happily, it was on the same day as Earl Curzon's speech that M. Briand took ship back to Europe. We chucked the Anglo-French quarrel on the deck after him. In fact, M. Briand did go to London to see Lloyd George, and thence the two of them to Cannes in a series

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the entire French nation out of existence." (Not only America, but even in England. The London *Daily Mail* went so far as to discontinue printing Mr. Wells's articles.) Mr. Wells was good-natured under the whim of fate that seized on him to be, for a few hours, a vicarious sacrifice to the spirit of harmony at any cost. He didn't rail at France any more, but in personal conversations with his friends in Washington he warned us that the sore was there, that the better policy was to exacerbate it and bring it out, and that in any event it would come out, anyhow, sooner or later. In a few weeks we knew he was right, and that this state of mind and heart on the part of the French Government was a fundamental and not-to-be-avoided element in the Conference.

of discussions aimed at patching up some kind of harmony. That trouble was now off in another orbit. So far as the Conference was concerned, all we knew or cared about was that land armament was off the agenda, and that it was Briand who put it off. We regretted that, but we couldn't see any help for it. Some of the delegates, especially those from Italy, kept thinking something or other might yet be done. But, generally, everybody knew that the attitude of the French had made it impossible to do anything about land armament. The Conference took a long breath over the ending of an unpleasant interlude, and turned to resume the subject of naval armament.

CHAPTER V

5-5-3 AND THE "MUTSU"

WE CAN now turn away for a time from France, and leave land armament wholly behind us. One turns away from it as from a thing that was unsatisfactory—all that happened about armies and land armament. It was made clear that the Conference could do nothing whatever about this subject. They could not, without hurting France's feelings, even go on record with a resolution recommending that something be done about land armament in the future—could not even express a "platonic aspiration," as Briand sarcastically called it, about the future limitation of armies and land armament.

But if this outcome was unsatisfactory, it was not what could be called necessarily discouraging. Land armament was relatively a minor part of the Conference agenda. Nobody thought of it as bulking big. While it had a place on the agenda, it had not been alluded to in that opening speech of Hughes; and it was in terms of Hughes's speech that the world was

thinking of the Conference. It was the dramatic quality of that speech, and the daring proposals it made about naval armament that had focused the eyes of the world on Washington.[1] And inasmuch as naval armament alone had been dealt with in that speech, it was consequently in terms of limiting naval armament that the world was thinking of the Conference and measuring its success. Because of this, the preventing of the Conference from doing anything about land armament caused less sense of discouragement than would have been the case under other circumstances. It was rather a happy accident that Briand's wish to return to Europe had caused this subject to be brought up, and, with its unsatisfactory outcome, to be put behind the Conference, within the first eleven days. With a sense of slight relief, but with no marked diminishing of hope, the Conference turned to the great subject of limiting naval armament.

II

In now resuming the course of the Hughes plan for naval armament, we find ourselves con-

[1] A despatch from Europe about this time, reflecting the currents of emotion that had been set in motion, said that Hughes had become "a hero to all Europe's rank and file." And it was a little later that Balfour, addressing a meeting in New York, described Hughes's speech as "one of the most remarkable utterances that have ever been made by any statesman under any circumstances."

sidering the forces that were involved in that strange word, curious to American ears, which for week after week had the leading place on the Conference stage—the *Mutsu.*

Of the three crises in the course the Hughes proposals about naval armament took, it was the *Mutsu* that provided the first. If you were to review the headlines of the newspapers during the first six weeks of the Conference, you would get the impression of a tide of battle swinging back and forth between two too equal antagonists. One day it was "Hughes plan wins; *Mutsu* dropped." The next it was "Japanese keep *Mutsu;* Hughes plan endangered." You could fill a chapter with these contradictory headlines. It was on again, off again, every other day.

To follow this dispute and have any adequate judgment on the concessions the Japanese contended for, it is necessary to explain what was the basis of the Hughes plan.

III

The fundamental theory on which the Hughes plan was based—and it is very important to understand this—was that *the nations should stop the building of competitive navies as of the opening day of the Conference, November 12th.* The

Hughes plan was not an attempt to assign to each of the various nations such a size of navy as it might theoretically be entitled to. That is the essential thing to remember about it when you try to follow the difficulty that arose with the Japanese. The basis of the Hughes plan was to take the navies of the world as they were —as of November 12th—*and stop there.* It is important to remember this, for it was the heart of the Hughes plan. It was the thing that made the Hughes plan unique, and the thing that made it possible to come to an agreement on it. Any attempt to arrive at a basis of limitation by considering how large a navy each nation *ought to have* would merely have led to endless debate. All that sort of thing had been discussed—and dismissed—during the long weeks that Hughes and our American naval experts had spent in preparing the plan. Various formulas had been considered, and discarded as futile.[1]

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1 To suggest the difficulties the navy men were in when they tried to work out a formula for the limitation of navies, I cannot do better than quote a portion of a despatch I sent from Washington one day in the fall, before the Conference began, at a time when Secretary Denby, Assistant Secretary Roosevelt, and the admirals were trying to evolve some kind of formula. The despatch reflected, with some intentionally humorous exaggeration, the impression that was in my mind after hearing several navy men talk of the troubles they were having. It is a typical picture of the atmosphere and state of mind at the time: "The question is more complex than the underlying declaration of principle. How soon it can be settled depends on how the Conference treats it. If the civilian conferees handle it themselves, they can arrive at a rough-and-ready common-sense definition in a very short time. But if the conferees turn it over to a committee of naval ex-

There had been attempts to arrive at a formula which should assign to each nation a navy in proportion to its relative wealth, or its population, or its length of coast-line, or its distance from potential enemies. In attempting to make a plan on any one of these bases, or on a combination of them, the American naval experts found

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perts, then, Heaven help us all! There will be weeks of argument over fine-spun details. A newspaper man amused himself the other day by writing a parody of the bewildering result of a conversation with a naval expert over what constitutes a navy adequate for purposes of national defense. The parody reflected the impression made on a civilian by a naval man's infinite technicalities. It read: 'Divide the number of American submarines by the number of British dreadnaughts, and subtract the number of Japanese cruisers. To this result add the cube-root of the sum of the coast-lines of America, Japan, and Great Britain. Multiply by the maximum distance between the coast of America and the coast of Japan. Add the average rate of exchange between pounds and dollars; divide by the sum of the national wealth of Japan, Great Britain, and the United States, and place the decimal point four figures from the right.' The hopeless thing about the naval expert definitions of a navy adequate for defense is not merely that they are technical. Intelligence can comprehend technicalities. But the real trouble about the naval expert discussions is that they get nowhere. They go round and round in circles. Each thing is contingent on something else, and there is neither starting point nor stopping point. But if the civilian conferees keep this subject within their own control, their intention and disposition are such that they can arrive at a satisfactory working definition within a very short time."

In reproducing this hasty despatch of the day, in which there was a certain amount of deliberately exaggerated humorous emphasis, I ought to be careful to say that the difficulties the navy men had were unescapable, from the nature of the problem as it was first presented to them. They had been asked to work out a formula for what was called an "equitable relativity" among the navies of the world. The truth is, as the navy men discovered, there was and is no such thing as an "equitable relativity" which all nations could be brought to agree upon, no such thing as an ideally perfect theoretic assignment of the size of navy each nation should be entitled to, having regard to its special needs, its distance from potential enemies and the like. The only possible formula was the one later adopted in the Hughes plan. And when the navy men were relieved from an impossible task, and given the simpler one of assembling the figures for the Hughes plan, they did a superb piece of work. It was intricate and delicate, and the data our navy men brought together stood up under the most searching and critical review by the naval experts of the other nations, later on.

themselves wandering in endless circles and getting nowhere.

I am not very familiar with what went on in the preparation of the Hughes plan. With that part of the work I had only the most casual contact, and wholly from the outside. That was, in fact, and still remains, to a large degree, one of the most carefully and successfully kept secrets in history. As I said in the account of the opening session, only nine human beings in the universe knew what the Hughes plan was. They were Mr. Hughes and the other three American delegates, together with President Harding and four navy men.[1]

But without knowing exactly how the Hughes plan came into existence, I suspect that what happened was that the American naval experts, soon after it was known the Conference was to be held, were asked to devise a formula for the limitation of armaments; that they spent weeks in futile attempts at arriving at a formula which should assign to each nation such a size of navy as should be theoretically adequate, based on coast-lines, or on national wealth, or what not;

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1 I have been told that there were only two copies of the plan in existence up to seven o'clock of the forenoon of November 12th, four hours before Hughes threw it before the world. I have also heard the Government Printing Office highly praised for the speed of their work. They were given the copy at seven in the morning, and by the time Hughes had finished his speech, the printed copies were ready to be given out.

and that in the end they threw up their hands in despair and "laid down" on Mr. Hughes.[1]

[1] In saying this I ought again to be careful not to seem to underestimate the work of our navy men. The truth is the naval men, when they were asked to evolve a formula for "equitable relativity," were hesitant before a mental bunker, so to speak, that is inherent in their training. The navy has a kind of axiom to the effect that the navy is the armed servant of the political end of government—that it is not the navy's business—indeed, that it is improper for them, even, to suggest how large or how small the country's navy should be; that it is the duty of the political end of the Government to tell the navy what the Government's political and diplomatic purposes are; and then the navy will tell the Government how large a navy is required for those objectives. The navy experts are entirely at home when asked to say how many ships they need for attack or defense against a foreign navy, or to accomplish any other naval purpose; but when they were summoned into the ante-room of statesmanship and asked to devise a formula for restricting the size of navies on a basis of "equitable relativity," they were in unfamiliar waters. During the period when the navy men were at work on this unfamiliar and fundamentally impossible task, one of them spoke at length about the difficulties involved; the widely varying and conflicting factors that had to be considered. He talked of how difficult it was to say, for example, how large a navy Great Britain should be permitted to have, with its far distant dominions and colonies, in proportion to the more compact territory of the United States or Japan. He spoke of the greater naval need of an island empire dependent on the sea for its food. He spoke of the difficulty and possible injustice of adjusting the navies of the nations on the basis of relative wealth and economic resources. He threw up his hands over the hopelessness of trying to fix the relative values, for example, of submarines and dreadnaughts, destroyers and seaplanes. I recall that when I suggested fixing the amount of money each nation should be permitted to spend, as a limitation on future building, this naval officer said that would not do because of the fluctuation of exchange. The truth is, trying to make a formula for a theoretically perfect balance among the navies was an impossible thing. But after that had been thrown overboard, and after the essential principle of merely taking the size of navy each nation actually has, as a basis, was decided upon, when the naval men were asked to supply the exact figures carried out to the third decimal point as to exactly what was the capital ship tonnage of each nation as of November 12th, and what relation this aggregate capital ship tonnage of the countries bore to each other—when the navy men were asked to do that they were entirely at home and they did a job that will stand up in history. They got the facts and figures with the greatest care and from the highest authorities. Later on, during the long tension between Hughes and Kato over the 10-6 ratio, when the Japanese as well as the naval experts of other nations went over Mr. Hughes's figures with the most critical and microscopic eye, the figures stood up to the test in a way that must have made the navy men proud and Hughes proud of them. On the basis of the figures supplied by our navy men, Hughes challenged the world. If the figures had turned out to be in any way in error, Hughes would have been embarrassed and possibly worse than merely embarrassed. But our navy men had done their job well, and all the experts from Great Britain and Japan were obliged to admit in the end, after weeks of intent scrutiny, that the figures were correct.

I suspect it was then that Mr. Hughes saw that the only practicable way was to take not *theoretically adequate navies,* but *actual navies* —not what each nation *ought to have,* but what each nation *did have.* I suspect he threw overboard all that the navy men had been doing, and asked them merely to supply him with complete figures as to the exact strength of *each navy as it then stood.*

Whether this guess of mine about the process is correct or not, it is certain that the basis of the Hughes plan was the relative strength of *existing* navies. Hughes said, in effect, "the way to stop is to stop. We will determine exactly how we stand in relation to each other *now,* and we will agree to keep that relativity. We will try to get the nations to stop building as of November 12th. If they are unwilling to stop as of that date, it is of little use to hope they will be willing to stop as of some other date, or to agree on some standard of relative strength that attempts to be theoretically or ideally fair." The whole basis of the Hughes plan, therefore, and the heart of its hope of success, was to take *the navies of the world as they stood.*

(I have a feeling that it is inadequate and out of proportion to stop with this mere allusion to the basis of the Hughes plan and how it was arrived at. The simplicity of that plan, the going

to the heart of an infinitely complex and difficult problem, and grasping the one thing that was at the same time essential and practicable—that was in itself an act of genius. It alone, quite apart from the rest of the work of the Conference, was an outstanding feat of intellect and common sense. The origin of the Hughes plan is one of the most picturesque of the "now-it-can-be-told" sort of thing that the history of the Conference developed. But this is not the place for it. The one point that needs to be made and understood for the purposes of the present chapter is that the basis of the Hughes plan was *actual tonnage of ships as they stood on November 12th.*[1])

IV

Now it turned out that the actual strength of the three great navies as of the day the Conference opened bore a relation to each other expressed in the figures 5-5-3—it was sometimes expressed in the equivalent figures 10-10-6. That is to say, the British and American navies were about equal to each other, and the Japanese navy was equal to about three fifths of each of the others. "Therefore," said Hughes in ef-

1 My feeling that the Hughes plan was an outstanding act of genius is borne out in a degree by what has been said by others since this chapter was written. Among others, an English naval expert, Mr. Hector Bywater, writing in the *Atlantic Monthly* for February, said: "With the wisdom that comes after the event, we can see now that no plan other than that propounded by Mr. Hughes would have led to the desired result."

fect, "we will preserve that proportion, that ratio, that relativity." ("Ratio" and "relativity" were the words that became prominent in the vocabulary of the Conference.)

To the Japanese, this ratio was acutely unsatisfactory. (It may well have been unsatisfactory to the British, also; but if it was, they swallowed their pride. The British "played the game." As I shall try to explain in a later chapter, I think it was the British who, so far as naval armament is concerned, gave up, in the interest of the purpose of this Conference, more that was concrete than any other nation. I think also it was the United States who gave up the greatest *potential* advantage. But what Great Britain gave up was actual. True, I suspect the British would not have been able to continue to keep the thing she gave up—namely dominance on the ocean, the position of mistress of the seas—if we should determine to take it away from her. In any event, at this Conference, Great Britain looked destiny in the face and made the gesture of self-denial.)

(At this point, it occurs to me, as a fact of more than ordinary dramatic interest, that I find myself recording one of the outstanding events of history in the course of a mere parenthesis in the narrative of the Conference. The assent of the British to the Hughes plan was the equiva-

lent of any naval battle in history. Indeed, it might, without unreasonable exaggeration, be regarded as the equivalent of all the naval battles in history. It was Colonel Repington who remarked that this American Secretary of State, in one speech, sunk more ships than all the admirals in history. It was Colonel Repington also who called Hughes's speech "the most magnificent political gesture in all history." But it is also true that the assent of the British to Hughes's plan was not less magnificent. And yet, that gesture of assent must have been made so quietly, so much without ostentation, that a historian of the Conference finds himself recording it in a mere parenthesis. But this lack of emphasis is in the correct proportion, so far as the narrative of the Conference is concerned. In the more exciting and contentious events of the Conference, this is the part the assent of the British played. I find that in Hughes's report, which he made to the President at the end of the Conference, and which the President transmitted to the Senate, he unconsciously reflects this lack of conspicuousness that the British assent played. He gives several pages to the resistance made by the Japanese, and many hundreds of words to the contentions set up by the French; but his only allusion to the British reception of the plan is in a phrase of four words occurring in

the middle of a sentence dealing with another phase of the Conference. Mr. Hughes's sentence reads: "The American plan fixed the ratio between the United States, Great Britain and Japan as 5-5-3 or 10-10-6; *Great Britain at once agreed,* but the Japanese Government desired a ratio of 10-10-7." And yet, those five words italicized above record one of the milestones in history. By the action those five words describe, Great Britain gave up the position she had held for two hundred years as undisputed mistress of the seas. About the place of this event in history, I shall say more in Chapter XI. Of course, Mr. Hughes's phrase "at once" must be taken as relative to the entire length of the Conference. It is pretty clear that the British assent did not come until after there had been a considerable period of minute examination of the details of the plan by the British naval experts, and several days of communication between the British delegates and their home government. But the inconspicuous place of this pregnant sentence in Mr. Hughes's narrative must reflect the uncontentious, unostentatious manner in which the British gave their assent. One can picture Mr. Balfour saying to Mr. Hughes, in the course of a casual conversation, "By the way, Mr. Secret'ry, it's quite all right about that ratio." In some such manner

as this, one imagines, it must have been that Great Britain did the thing that generously waved aside all argument, that put the weight of their assent behind the pressure on the others to do likewise; that made the Conference a success; that yielded Great Britain's primacy on the seas to an equality with America; and that set up, in any way you look at it, one of the milestones of human history.)

The Japanese, I say, were acutely dissatisfied with the Hughes plan. The Japanese naval men had brought a formula of their own to Washington; but the Hughes tactics of laying all the cards on the table at the opening session deprived both Great Britain and Japan of the opportunity of presenting whatever formulas of their own making they may have brought with them. You might say that in a way this was a little "raw" of Hughes. You could make out a good case to the effect that while it was all right for Hughes to name the *Maine,* and the *Missouri,* and the *Virginia,* and other American ships, and offer to scrap them, he might have stopped there. He might have given an opening to the others to say what they were willing to do. For Hughes to go on and name the *Hoods* and the other proud ships of Britain, and tell her she would be expected to scrap them; and to name the *Kii,* the *Owari,* the *Toga,* and the *Mutsu,*

and the other ships that were the pride of Japan, and tell her she would be expected to scrap them —that was, let us admit, pretty bold. But it was just this boldness that gave the Hughes plan the éclat and success it had.

The formula the Japanese had brought with them was based not on her existing strength, but rather on the strength she hoped to have, and thought she ought to have. That is to say, it was based on precisely the theory that Hughes had discarded. For this formula of their own, the Japanese put up a fight.

From the opening of the Conference, almost every other day, statements, more or less in the shape of hints and innuendo, more or less direct, came from the Japanese to the effect that they weren't quite satisfied with the 5-5-3 ratio. They didn't feel their proportion was large enough. These successive statements of greater demands emanating from the Japanese increased in definiteness and directness until they reached a point where the Americans could hardly afford to ignore them. At that point was the first episode that might be called a crisis in the Hughes plan.

V

I happen to recall vividly the day this happened, when the American determination to

stand firmly by the Hughes plan was made known. On that day there was a reception at our house for the foreign and American correspondents. Those whose duties did not call on them to follow what is called the "spot news" of the Conference, came early—Mr. Bryan, Will White, H. G. Wells, Miss Tarbell, and the rest of those whom the more active workers used to refer to as "the trained seals" (a term whose precise relevancy I have never fully understood, but as to which the disdain, if there is any in it, is sufficiently tempered with kindly, if condescending, tolerance).

But those whose work entailed actual attendance at everything that happened came late and in that state of alert and eager spirits which attends the "breaking" of important news. I recall vividly one of the Japanese correspondents, who came last of all, and in a state of breathless apology explained—in the slightly pedantic, slightly imperfect English that gives a touch of quaint and attractively exalted courtesy to so many of the Japanese—that he had been engaged upon an errand of international good will. He had learned that afternoon, as all the correspondents had, that the Americans were determined to stand firmly by the Hughes plan; and he had hurried to officials of his own government to tell them "the Americans would be deeply

pained by any obstruction to the very noble plan of Mr. Hughes, and Japan must not do so any more." [1]

VI

Just what had happened that afternoon cannot be made clear by any method better than by repeating here a condensation of the account of it which was sent by Mr. Frederic W. Wile to his paper, the Philadelphia *Ledger:*

America tonight hurled her second bombshell into the Armament Conference. She declines to consider proposals for more fighting ships than the Hughes program allots. The bombshell is aimed in the direction of Japan. It burst upon the horizon with dramatic suddenness a bare twenty-four hours after Admiral Baron Kato's notification that the Japanese seek an increase in their tonnage quota. Spokesmen of the United States virtually branded Japan's proposals as unacceptable. They are considered as striking at the very vitals of America's plan and purpose. The Hughes program aims at direct and immediate stoppage of the competition in preparations for aggressive warfare. Japan's suggestions run counter, in American opinion, to the achievement of that object. The

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1 It is a fact that about this time a group of the Japanese journalists who were in Washington to report the Conference, held a meeting and initiated something in the nature of a "round robin," demanding that the Japanese delegates accept the Hughes plan without reservations. This sort of cleavage, based on questions within the domestic politics of Japan, was constantly cropping out at the Conference. Most of the Japanese newspaper men represented an element of Japanese public opinion more liberal (more liberal, partly, of course, because less responsible) than some of the official delegates.

American position was defined in terms unmistakably savoring of an ultimatum. . . . They remain firmly of the opinion that any power, no matter which, that seeks to raise the quota, subjects itself to the suspicion that motives other than those of national defense somewhere find lodgement in its thoughts and calculations. America has construed the public opinion of its own country and of the world at large as meaning that naval competition shall stop. The United States says bluntly it cannot be stopped if somebody, somewhere, is going to begin it again. Giving one the right to build another ship will mean, in America's estimate, a prompt clamor by others in the same direction. . . . In making a prompt categorical reply to proposals for "raising the Hughes ante" America is actuated by one simple purpose. That is, to let the people of the United States and all others concerned know exactly what we mean by the Hughes program and our determination to leave no stone unturned to carry it into execution.

This bombshell did not cause the Japanese to stop. Never in the shape of anything approaching an ultimatum, but in a score of ways direct and indirect, they kept letting it be known that they felt the Hughes ratio to be unsatisfactory to them. The Japanese wish included two features. They wanted a ratio of 5-5-3½ (in this narrative I speak interchangeably of the Hughes plan ratio as 5-5-3, or 10-10-6; and the ratio the Japanese wanted was 5-5-3½ or 10-10-7); and they especially wanted to keep one particular ship that the Hughes plan had scrapped, namely,

the *Mutsu*. For weeks on weeks, that unfamiliar word had the biggest place in the headlines.

The Japanese insistence was not what could be called firm. It might be said, not that they insisted on their own claims, but rather that they evaded assenting to the Hughes plan. They received some opprobrium for their course and endured it stoically. Their motives were impugned. It was said they were holding up the Conference in order to make a trade for advantages elsewhere. I came to be impressed with a hurt and pleading quality, almost a pathetic quality, in the tenacity with which the Japanese clung to their position against what must have seemed to them pretty disagreeable comment emanating from many American sources. Finally, one day at lunch with some Japanese journalists, I got to the bottom of it. It was Mr. Adachi Kinnosuke who told me what I later included in a despatch. I repeat this despatch in the words that describe the way it struck me at the time, and with which I tried to make it clear to our own public:

> All the talk about Japan not accepting the ratio of ships laid down by Mr. Hughes probably has had less to do with the Armament Conference than with politics in Japan. For many years the Japanese politicians of all parties, and especially those Japanese leaders who are now in power, have been telling the Japanese people

that they must have seven ships to every ten that any other nation has. "Seven to ten" has been a kind of political slogan in Japan. The Japanese are very much poorer than we are, and it has been more difficult for the Japanese Government to persuade its people to give up their money for shipbuilding than it has been with us. The consequence is that the size of the national navy has cut a much larger figure in Japanese politics than it has in ours. The Japanese politicians have built up a sentiment among their people for the definite naval ratio of seven to ten. Our own naval men, like those in Japan, have always had a theoretically desirable ratio as the standard to work toward. Our theoretical ratio was ten tons to Japan's five. But our navy men and our government leaders have never had to preach this ratio up and down the country to political audiences in order to persuade the people to endorse the taxation. Ninety-nine out of a hundred of our people have never heard anything about naval ratios. But the Japanese leaders have had to preach their ratio of seven to ten up and down the country until their people were familiar with it; and that is what is worrying them now. In their hearts the Japanese have never really doubted that the Hughes ratio of six to ten is correct, but they have had to consider their political situation at home. The Japanese position on the navy, in fact, is somewhat like the Briand speech on land armament. It is intended not so much to affect the present Conference as to avoid political upheaval "back home." It has been much like many speeches made by American Congressmen, designed less to affect the decision at issue than to square themselves with their constituents.

Not only has the seven to ten ratio been a Japanese

political slogan, but further than that, the particular ship involved, the *Mutsu,* has been made a kind of popular personification and symbol of Japanese naval aspirations. To the Japanese people the *Mutsu* has become among ships what our unknown American was among soldiers at the recent Armistice Day celebration. It has a halo round it. A Japanese journalist tells me that every Japanese laborer feels that he has a personal dime or quarter in the *Mutsu.* It was built with money obtained through voluntary self-sacrifice from Japanese laborers, who earn about a quarter a day and pay about a nickel of that in taxes. In large part it was built not out of taxation, but actually out of voluntary gifts and popular collections and subscriptions. This journalist tells me that the shock involved in scrapping this splendid new ship, less than a month old, may cause the overturn of the present Japanese ministry before the delegates get back from the Conference. Incidentally, this Japanese journalist revealed a rather likable trait in Japanese psychology. When I asked him why his delegates didn't go to the British and American delegates and explain their political necessities back home in the same spirit in which this journalist had spoken to me, he replied that the Japanese delegates were much too proud and sensitive to ask concessions on any basis of personal or political self-interest. Of course, the British and American delegates would not be able to yield, but they might get a better understanding of the spirit of the situation. The ten to six ratio cannot be changed. Ten to six is not a policy or a doctrine or a theory; it is a statement of fact. Ten to six is the ratio of the navies to each other as of November 12th, the day the Conference opened. If there is to be a cessation of competition, that is the point at which it ceases. In

effect, the Japanese say: "We are willing to stop, but first you stop where you are, and let us go ahead of where we now are about ten yards, and then let us all stop." The American position is that if we are to cease competition, then the only practicable basis is to stop where everybody now is. If you depart from that, you get into the impossible field of trying to arrive at a theoretical ratio of just what size of navy each country is entitled to. That would lead to endless debate and technicalities.

It will be observed that while I tried to make the domestic political embarrassments of the Japanese delegates clear to an American audience, and while I expressed, as I felt, a sympathetic understanding of their difficulties, I stated that there was no hope that America would make any compromise on the ratio of 5 to 3. But among the other things I had learned from my Japanese friend was the fact that as between the 5-3½ ratio and the *Mutsu*, it was the latter that meant more to them. It was the privilege of retaining the *Mutsu* that would go furthest toward "squaring" them with their people at home, as we would express it in America; or toward "saving their faces," as the Oriental expression has it.

The Japanese contention against the Hughes plan really fell into four parts: First of all, Japan attacked the fundamental principle on which the Hughes plan was founded—the prin-

ciple which I have pointed out repeatedly was the only possible one upon which any limitation of navies could be based. Japan set up the same argument which Mr. Hughes, in advance of making his plan, had considered and seen to be impossible, and had dismissed. Japan wanted the right to have such a size of navy relative to the others as would be adapted to what she considered her "special needs." The answer to that obviously was and is, that if any one nation should insist on considering her special needs, each of the other nations would be equally entitled to take account of its special needs. Each nation would have to be the judge of what constituted its own special need, and no two nations could be brought to agree on a definition of "special need," whether for itself or for any of the others. The end of the attitude taken by Japan would have been a prolonged debate which could have got nowhere. As Mr. Hughes says in his report, "General considerations of national need, aspirations and expectations, policy and programme could be brought forward by each power in justification of some hypothetical relation of naval strength with no result but profitless and interminable discussion." The fundamentally sound logic of the Hughes plan as the only possible one was indisputable. There were only two courses: either to stop competing,

or to go on competing. To attempt to find any other course would involve a fallacy in logic which Hughes expresses by saying, "It was impossible to terminate competition in naval armament if the powers were to condition their agreement upon the advantages they hoped to gain in the competition itself." I repeat, there were only two possible courses. One was for the nations to stop competing at the point where they were on November 12th. The other was to go on competing. If competition was to go on, and if the United States were to enter upon that competition with all its strength, Japan could not hope to keep a ratio of 10-7 or anything approaching it. If the course of competition were forced upon us, and if we chose to enter it with all our strength, we could build not merely ten ships to Japan's seven, but more nearly four ships to her one, and even beyond that. As an American naval officer, speaking in advance of the Conference, and using naval terminology, expressed it, "If it is to be a race, then 'three bells and a jingle; full steam ahead,' and see who goes broke first." It is apparent from Hughes's report, as well as from many things we all observed during the course of the Conference, that Hughes stood absolutely firm for his plan as the only one upon which limitation could be based. Hughes kept the argument on the basis of *actual existing naval*

strength and never moved from it. His report says:

> When the argument was presented by Japan that a better ratio—that is, one more favorable to Japan—than that assigned by the American plan, should be adopted, and emphasis was placed upon the asserted needs of Japan, the answer was made that if Japan was entitled to a better ratio upon the basis of actual existing naval strength it should be, but otherwise it could not be, accepted.

In the course of time Japan yielded on this point and accepted "actual existing naval strength" as the basis of limitation. But the same instant Japan raised a question as to the definition of what "actual existing naval strength" is. Japan contended that "actual existing naval strength" consists of ships in commission only. Hughes's plan, on the other hand, for the purpose of measuring existing naval strength, had included ships in course of construction to the degree in which they approached completion as a part of actual existing naval strength. (By this, Hughes meant, for example, that if a ship of forty thousand tons is three fourths complete, it should be counted as 30,000 tons in computing the existing naval strength of the nation owning it.)

The Hughes plan did not, of course, consider merely paper programmes for building, but did consider all "ships laid down or upon which

money had been spent." The heart of this contention is expressed in Hughes's report in these words:

> It was the position of the American Government that ships in course of construction should be counted [as a part of actual existing naval strength] to the extent to which construction had already progressed at the time of the convening of the Conference. The latter position was strongly contested by Japan upon the ground that a ship was not a ship unless it was completed and ready to fight.

The heart of this controversy lay in the fact that if ships afloat only were considered in measuring the existing relative strength, America would not be credited with the more than three hundred million dollars which she had laid out on unfinished ships. That these unfinished ships of ours, which we could complete in periods ranging from a few weeks upward, were a part of our existing naval strength, is inconsistible. In the end the Japanese were compelled to yield to the logic of the Hughes plan on this issue also, and assented to the Hughes position that existing naval strength consists of ships afloat and ready to fight, plus ships under construction, in the degree in which they approach completion.

The next point raised by the Japanese was to the effect that while the "ratio proposed by the American Government might be acceptable un-

der existing conditions, it could not be regarded as acceptable by the Japanese Government if the Government of the United States should fortify or establish additional naval bases in the Pacific Ocean." The answer of the American Government to this was that it could not make any promises about the future fortification of its own coasts or of the Hawaiian Islands—that with respect to these it must, in the language of Mr. Hughes's report, "remain entirely unrestricted." But as to the fortifications and naval bases in our insular possessions in the Pacific, except Hawaii, the American delegation

expressed itself as willing to maintain the status quo if Japan and the British Empire would do the like. It was recognized that no limitation should be made with respect to the main islands of Japan, or Australia and New Zealand, with their adjacent islands, any more than with respect to the insular possessions adjacent to the coast of the United States, including Alaska and the Panama Canal Zone, or the Hawaiian Islands. The case of the Aleutian Islands, stretching out toward Japan, was a special one, and had its counterpart in that of the Kurile Islands, belonging to Japan, and reaching out to the northeast toward the Aleutians. It was finally agreed that the status quo should be maintained as to both these groups.

The final contention of the Japanese was the most spectacular, the one that figured most in the newspapers; but relatively it was much the

least important. Once the ratio of 10-6 was agreed to, it did not matter much whether Ship A was scrapped and Ship B saved, or vice versa. It was true, the Hughes plan contemplated scrapping all ships under construction; and in the American estimate, the *Mutsu* was a ship under construction, although the American estimate conceded that the *Mutsu* was about ninety-eight per cent. complete when the Conference met. The Japanese delegation insisted that the *Mutsu* had actually been finished, was commissioned and fully manned before the Conference met. The difference was a minute one at best. Moreover, for reasons I have given, this latest and newest addition to the Japanese Navy was a source of especial pride to the Japanese people. As it was expressed, "the *Mutsu* had a halo round it." In the end, it was agreed to yield to this one of the Japanese contentions. The American ratio was maintained in all respects, but the Japanese were permitted to keep the *Mutsu,* scrapping a ship called the *Settsu* in its place.

VII

The day this conclusion was arranged and given to the public was one of the big days of the Conference. It came about, or at least the public announcement of it came out, in a way to

make good feeling. It happened that on the same morning the newspapers carried a despatch from Tokio, saying the Japanese had decided to yield the *Mutsu,* and on the same page were the announcements from Washington that the Conference had decided to let the Japanese keep the ship upon which she set such sentimental store.

It was a happy occasion and an important one. The official announcement was given out in a way that reflected the satisfaction which Hughes and the other American conferees felt. (The British shared this satisfaction, for they had joined the Americans in urging Japan to accept this ratio.)

To be sure, there was just a little dismay. In order to let Japan keep the *Mutsu* it was necessary to rearrange the Hughes plan in a way which was slight in degree but caused some inconvenience to America and Great Britain. The arrangement, as I have said, was that Japan should keep the *Mutsu* and scrap in its stead the *Settsu,* which the Hughes plan included among the ships to be saved. But the *Mutsu* was a newer and larger ship than the *Settsu.* In order, therefore, to equalize matters and keep the ratio the same, it was necessary that America should complete two of her new ships which the Hughes plan had scrapped. This didn't amount

to a great deal, for these two American ships were well on their way to completion anyhow. But in order to equalize things for Great Britain, it was made necessary for her to build two new ships from the ground up. I recall the dismay of several of the British correspondents at the announcement that it would be necessary for the hard-pressed British taxpayer, if Great Britain was to have the exact ratio, to give up some twenty million pounds in order to let the Japanese "save their faces" about the *Mutsu*.

Nevertheless, considered with relation to the entire naval holiday, and to the Hughes plan as a whole, the variation from the original literal Hughes plan, was negligible.[1] The relativity, which was the essential thing in the Hughes plan, was not affected at all. We all felt as happy as Hughes obviously did. The Hughes plan on naval armament had passed the only obstacle that had so far developed, and the only one that anybody had anticipated. So far as capital ships were concerned, we assumed the Conference was as good as over.

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1 The original Hughes plan had given the following tonnage to each of the countries:

United States.....500,000 tons
Great Britain.....500,000 tons
Japan .....300,000 tons

The modifications involved in letting the Japanese keep the *Mutsu* gave to each of the nations the following tonnage:

United States.....525,000 tons
Great Britain.....525,000 tons
Japan .....315,000 tons

CHAPTER VI

THE SECOND CRISIS

HUGHES had announced that Japan had finally accepted the 5-5-3 ratio—had accepted, indeed, all those sweeping proposals about capital ships that Hughes had made in his opening speech, with the single exception that she should be permitted to keep the *Mutsu* and scrap the *Settsu* in its stead. Inasmuch as Great Britain had already accepted the ratio, this announcement was of enormous importance. We took it as meaning that the Hughes capital-ship ratio, the essential part of the Hughes plan, the part that had thrilled the world, was practically adopted. We supposed that this acceptance by Japan, after Great Britain had already accepted, was the equivalent of final success. We recalled the public thrill that had greeted the announcement of the Hughes plan on that sensational opening day; and we assumed that that thrill was now justified by fulfilment. It was an afternoon of rejoicing, and when the newspapers of the following morning printed the announcement, they

and the public generally reflected the universal sense of satisfaction.

Then, within eighteen hours after Mr. Hughes had told the newspaper men, within the period from late one evening until ten the next morning, almost before the public had had a chance to take in the great news which implied that the Hughes capital-ship ratio was substantially a completed thing—something happened. And since the manner of its happening became of some importance later, it should be told in detail.

II

There was at the Conference a certain Lord Riddell. (He, too, should have a whole chapter.) The precise status of Lord Riddell, and the nature of his rôle at the Conference, was a subject of much discussion. He was not officially connected with the British delegation. He himself was always emphatic in making that clear. Nevertheless, he was on the most intimate terms with them. Mr. Balfour and Ambassador Geddes came to dinner with him; and he went to dinner with them. There was some talk that he was a kind of unofficial representative of Lloyd George with the duty of scouting around on the outside and reporting to his chief what American politics would call "the low-down." Undoubt-

edly, Lord Riddell, was close to Lloyd George and was in frequent communication with him.

In any event, there was one definite function which Lord Riddell, in a wholly unofficial way, took on himself, and which became one of the most important aspects of the Conference, occasionally more interesting than what went on within the Conference room. He used to hold levees for the newspaper men twice a day, at 10:30 and 3:30. At these levees he used to give news to the reporters. The news was not official. The British had an official press representative, but it was not Lord Riddell. Riddell did it all "on his own." If you were to accept the superficial aspect of Lord Riddell's activities in this respect, you would be obliged to take it for granted that he just sort of liked to be kind to his fellow newspaper men (he is himself the owner of a weekly paper in London).[1]

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1 Completeness in this narrative requires it to be recorded that some, especially those who were partial to the French, and those who were antagonistic to, or suspicious of, the British diplomacy, claimed that Lord Riddell's real function at the Conference was that of a British propagandist—to further, by his contacts with the newspaper men, whatever might be the British objective from time to time. This charge was based on appearances, and on the nature of the case. Without any doubt, Lord Riddell was and is close to Lloyd George. No doubt he would further the interests of Great Britain when he could do so legitimately. Once, in the course of some badinage between him and an American newspaper man, he said, "I am a lawyer"—He was a lawyer before he became the owner of a London weekly newspaper—"I am a lawyer, and therefore a philanthropist, and glad to answer questions without charge." Against the theory that Lord Riddell was a British propagandist in any official sense, is the fact that there was said to be feeling between him and the man who was officially attached to the British delegation as its liaison man with the press. The official British publicity man was said by many to resent the presence and the activities of the unofficial Lord Riddell.

These sessions with Lord Riddell came to be, for the reporters, one of the most eagerly attended events of the day. Not only did he always have news to give out, he was an arresting and vivid personality, and he had a gift of quick badinage—altogether an interesting character with marked individuality and much ability. The newspaper men were grateful to him for his news and liked him for his personality.

On this particular morning, Lord Riddell told the reporters that at a secret session the day before, the matter of capital-ship allowance for France had come up; that Hughes had undertaken to make the allotment to France on the basis of her present existing relative strength plus a little more,[1] namely, on a basis of 1.75 for France as compared to 3 for Japan and 5 each for Great Britain and the United States; and that the French delegates had created consternation by refusing to accept so small an allotment, and were insisting on the right to build ten new capital ships of 35,000 tons each.

To exaggerate the sensation which this news made would be difficult. It carried us at one

1 It should be observed that in doing this, Hughes was making an exception in favour of France, compared to the basis he had laid down for Great Britain, the United States, and Japan. These three nations were required to scrap 40 per cent. of their present strength. France was permitted to keep all her present strength amounting to 164,000 tons, and was assigned enough in addition to bring her future total up to 175,000 tons.

plunge from the heights of satisfaction to the deeps of most disturbed concern. We were wholly unprepared for it.[1] There was no way we could have anticipated it. It is true that when Mr. Hughes, the night before, had made his announcement of what we had taken to be the success of the plan, through Japan's acceptance, he had coupled the announcement with one small qualification in the shape of a brief closing paragraph. "This arrangement," Mr. Hughes had concluded, "between the United States, Great Britain, and Japan, is, so far as the number of ships to be retained or scrapped is concerned, dependent upon a suitable agreement with France and Italy[2] as to their capital ships, a

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1 It is true that some weeks before, shortly after the Conference opened, one of the newspapers had carried a story to the effect that the French would put forth a claim to be allowed to increase her capital ships. But this unofficial story had not sunk in on us, and when the announcement was now made authoritatively, it caused surprise and consternation.

2 It should be pointed out here that Italy "played the game" handsomely. Italy accepted the allotment assigned to her without demurring. Mr. Hughes's report says: "Italy sought parity with France, and this principle having been accepted in the course of the discussion, it was likewise proposed that Italy should be allowed 175,000 tons of capital ships in replacement. . . . The proposed maximum limit of 175,000 tons was at once accepted by Italy." Previously, Hughes, in the letter he wrote to Briand, calling on the latter to make it possible for the Conference to succeed, had made pointed allusion to the willingness of Italy to accept the allotment made to her. "Italy," Mr. Hughes told Briand, "is desirous to reduce her capital ships, because of the obvious requirements of her economic life, to the lowest possible basis, and there will not be the slightest difficulty in making an agreement with Italy if we can reach a suitable understanding with France." It can be taken for granted, from the whole spirit of this message of Hughes's, that he meant Briand to take a hint from this reference to Italy's economic condition. In other parts of this same letter, Hughes made more direct reference to France's need to spend her money on her economic requirements rather than on warships.

matter which is now in course of negotiations."

But nobody paid any attention to this brief and seemingly almost irrelevant qualification to the great announcement. It did not occur to anybody that France or Italy had it in their power, or in their desire, to take any important part in the naval armament agreement. Everybody took it for granted that this was a matter for the three big-navy nations alone. That was the atmosphere of the Conference. Everybody, when they talked of the naval ratio, spoke in terms of Great Britain, America, and Japan. Nobody thought of France or Italy as having any particular "say" about the capital-ship ratio. If there were any who saw the faintest possibility of anything menacing, even among those who had become troubled about France's attitude toward the Conference, they felt that that country had already, as it was expressed by those who had come to feel frankly a little bitter about her, "done all her devilment" when she prevented the Conference from taking up land armament. Among Americans certainly there was hardly any one who dreamed that France, having got the right to go her own way so far as land armament was concerned, would thereafter embarrass the Conference in the matter of naval armament also.

III

I have said that the news that France was making trouble was given out by Lord Riddell at his 10:30 morning session. Naturally, it was the big news of the day. The newspaper men were keen for more details about it.

Then at his afternoon session, a few hours later, Lord Riddell brought along one of the official British delegates as a spokesman to answer such questions as the newspaper men might ask on this or any other subject. Of course, the questions the newspaper men asked on this occasion had to do with the news of the recalcitrant action of France. The official British spokesman told us gravely that, of course, he could not reveal anything that had transpired at a secret session. (We already knew it, and he must have known we already knew it, from the unofficial British spokesman, Lord Riddell.) But in answer to pressing from the reporters, this official British spokesman explained, through the means of hypothetical questions, that, of course, it must be assumed that in the event that any nation with a smaller navy should insist on the right to go on and build a navy greatly superior to what she now has, then that would make it necessary for Great Britain to

increase greatly her allowance of, roughly, 500,000 tons, which was the essential part of the Hughes plan. In short, this official British spokesman let us know that what France was insisting on would practically kill the Hughes plan and make the Conference futile. With grave and punctilious disavowal of any willingness to reveal what he had learned in the secret sessions; with careful avoidance of mentioning names of individuals or nations, and using only the device of hypothetical situations, he made us understand that if France should insist on raising her allotted ratio of 1.75 up to, or close to, 3, then Italy would insist on the same size of navy as France; these two 3's combined would make 6, which was more than Great Britain's allowance of 5; and Great Britain could never be content with a navy smaller than the combined navies of any two other European nations. In short, and pointedly, this British spokesman made us understand clearly that the course which France was energetically pursuing would be certain to result in what the newspaper men, in their informal talk, described as "upsetting the apple cart." A colloquial summary of the situation of the moment, if expressed in a terse headline, would have read, "France spills the beans."

Now when the newspapers printed all this the

next day, the French were furious with the British. One of them went to Mr. Balfour, complained bitterly of Lord Riddell for telling the newspaper men, and demanded his head. Mr. Balfour replied that he couldn't give them Lord Riddell's head because Lord Riddell wasn't within his jurisdiction. Lord Riddell wasn't a member of the British delegation, and had no official connection with it, and therefore, couldn't be sent home to London, or drawn and quartered or otherwise disposed of to the satisfaction of the French.

Thereafter the friends of the French made the air of Washington vibrant with bitter complaint to the effect that it was all a British trick. They didn't deny the facts. The burden of their complaint was that the British had broken faith,[1] had revealed what had taken place under a pledge of secrecy. It was during these days that some of the French, whose knowledge of more classical English was limited, nevertheless acquired sufficient command of vernacular Eng-

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1 M. Sarraut, when he received the correspondents that night, said: "A definite promise of secrecy has been made, and so far as the French delegation is concerned, this promise still holds good. If indiscretions have been committed, they have not been on our side and therefore I cannot discuss them." One among the correspondents who were best informed about French matters, and closest in touch with the French delegation, Mr. Lincoln Eyre, of the New York *World*, wrote: "I learn to-night that M. Sarraut is resolved to inform Chairman Hughes at the Naval Armament Committee meeting to-morrow, that in view of the 'British indiscretion' he no longer will feel himself obliged to remain silent."

lish to know the meaning of the term "frame-up," and used it with fluency and force.

Maybe it was a frame-up. Maybe that was Lord Riddell's rôle in Washington—to commit what diplomacy calls "calculated indiscretions," to say things and have them disavowed; to learn things officially, and tell them unofficially—tell them at the time and under the circumstances best adapted to serve the interests of the British Empire. Maybe his rôle was like that of the "sitzredacteur" in the German newspapers, the unofficial editor who does the going to jail for the real editor when libel suits are prosecuted. Maybe there was an understanding between the unofficial Lord Riddell and the official Balfour. I don't know. If there was, it was something in the further reaches of the more intricate mechanism of diplomacy, and I am simple-minded about such things.[1]

But if it was a frame-up, it was certainly done to the queen's taste—likewise to the King's and

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1 To those who were sympathetic to the French and suspicious of the subtlety of British diplomacy, it was merely the more convincing evidence of a careful "frame-up" when Lord Riddell was able to say that he had got the information he let out about the proceedings of the secret session, not from his own delegation, but from the Italians.

For myself, I was not able to be much impressed by all the talk about "British propaganda," in connection with this episode. Doubtless Lord Riddell would turn a trick for the British Empire whenever he could. But he was constantly getting news of every sort, from every possible source, and giving it out to the newspaper men. Moreover, in this present instance, it was the nature of what they did that hurt the French—not the making it public. The news would have got out sometime, anyhow.

Lloyd George's also, not to speak of Mr. H. G. Wells's. The next day the whole world was on France's neck. If the British did really plan this result, take off your hat to them for a work of art beautifully done, regardless of whatever are the ethical considerations, or the rules of the game, in these remoter reaches of the art of diplomacy.

But if Great Britain had been guilty of a diplomatic trick—and I use the word "if" in complete sincerity, for I don't know—it was France that had done the thing. Great Britain had merely let it out. The attitude of the French about the whole episode was naïve. At one time or another during the twelve weeks of the Conference we heard a good deal about the peculiarities of "the Gallic temperament." We learned, whenever the French did anything that seemed to us pretty extraordinary, to look bewildered and say that must be another case of the Gallic temperament. At one time or another we almost got to the point where we had ourselves taken on a characteristic French gesture and learned to say, *"C'est l'esprit Française, Monsieur!"* But of all the odd points of view that the French took, or that pro-French journalists took in their behalf, the oddest was their crying to Heaven about the wickedness of the British in revealing this secret.

The French didn't deny they had made the claim to the additional capital ships. Some of the apologists for the French even admitted—not only admitted, but actually pleaded in extenuation—that the French didn't make this claim seriously; that they didn't have the money to build these ships, nor the intention to build them; but that they had merely put their claim forward as the first step in building up a position which they could use as a trading point with Great Britain. (It was apparent that the French were at all times eager to make Great Britain come to an agreement with them covering certain European matters.) The French admitted they had made the demand in the secret session; but acted as if they really thought in all sincerity that the essentially deplorable thing about the whole transaction was Great Britain's letting it out to the public.

Primarily, it was chiefly a part of the European politics of France and Great Britain; but essentially it was a thrust at the heart of the Conference. The American delegates were deeply disturbed. It was said that in the secret sessions Hughes had talked with such simple directness that the response of one of the French delegates had been expressed through his lachrymose glands. However, that story may have been one of many examples of the sensational

overcrowding the probable, of which nearly every day of the Conference was full. In any event, when Hughes could make no progress with the French delegates (the ones that were left here were minor men; both Briand and Viviani had by his time returned to Paris), he sent a long cablegram to Briand. Hughes's language to Briand was pretty pointed. He practically put it up to Briand to change his country's position, or take the responsibility for making the Conference a failure. He recited the facts, and said in so many words,

> You will observe the attitude of France will determine the success or failure of this effort to reduce the heavy burden of naval armament.

Briand replied by cable in a long message which said a good deal about "care of the vital interests of France," and the like. There were polite conveyances of "cordial remembrances," and a slightly self-righteous reference to "the effort of conciliation which we are making." However, in the midst of all this, there was the essential and needed sentence:

> I have given instructions to our delegates in the sense which you desire.

Thus the French receded from their position on capital ships, and the second crisis that threat-

ened the life of the Hughes plan was safely over.

IV

I have described the episode as it appeared at the time. This version reflects what nearly all the American observers felt. That the Americans were deeply disturbed[1] by it, there can be no doubt. Mr. Hughes's despatch to Briand, one sentence of which I have quoted, shows sufficiently how he felt. It was about the same time that another of the Americans was quoted in the gossip of Washington as saying, "France came to this Conference to get something; she has not yet realized that this is a Conference where we give up things."

Of the more or less resentful sentiment about France that prevailed at the time, I can give no evidence more readily available than some paragraphs from one of my own despatches of that period. I repeat it in the same spirit in which I have repeated several of these contemporaneous despatches, more to give the reader a vivid picture of the atmosphere of the time, than to let it stand as a final or well-considered judgment.

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[1] The despatch sent at the time by Mr. Charles Michelson of the New York *World* said: "The British delegation is disgusted, the American delegation alarmed, and the French delegation indignant."

Every time France almost upsets the apple cart, Washington good humoredly says: "It's merely the Gallic temperament." We don't pretend that we wholly approve this Gallic temperament, or even understand it fully, but we find it useful as a kind of blanket explanation for things that are otherwise inexplicable. In that rôle the phrase is called into useful service rather more often than can be regarded as ideal. The other day an entirely serious writer in one of the Paris papers, replying to a foreigner's comments about the spirit of Paris, said: "France wants to be petted." It was a rather unusual thing for a mature person of the male sex to say about his country, but that seems to go along with the rest as a part of "the Gallic temperament." Although their most recent blow-up has caused a good deal of plain speaking both to the French and about the French, I suspect the American disposition continues to be one of good-humored patience, coupled with complete firmness. Undeniably, Mr. Hughes and Mr. Root and Mr. Lodge are pretty elderly persons. It must bore them more than a trifle to be called on to include among their diplomatic duties that of "petting" a nervous and excitable nation with a feminine temperament.

We all use the words "France" and "the French" as a convenient collective term to describe the French Government and the French officials here at the Conference; but when we try to be more accurate we all make distinctions between these individuals and, on the other hand, those sturdy millions of the plain people of France who have made more sacrifices in war and are more interested in ending war than any other nation on the face of the earth. The French people haven't lost any of the good opinion of America; but if some of our American officials and ob-

servers felt free to talk about some of the French politicians, there might be some tolerably plain speaking. The French psychology seems to fail to go hand in hand with American psychology. There are signs also that some of the French may have misinterpreted the college degrees and other honors we heaped on Marshal Foch as signs of a willingness on our part to give sympathetic support to France's disposition to maintain a large army and to her militaristic aims generally. Some American officials, who must manage the intricate business details involved in untangling our alliance with France, might conceivably find it difficult to reconcile the "Gallic pride," which insists on a larger navy than it can possibly pay for, with some other aspects of France's management of her financial affairs. Seriously and pointedly, this recent action of France jeopardizes the present Conference no less than it jeopardizes the future economic conference which the French are ardently trying to bring about. Nevertheless, the net of it all is that America is determined to continue to make allowances for whatever France does as the not wholly to be blamed actions of a nation not yet free from the hysteria of war and fear.

V

Now, having given the impression of this episode that was prevalent at the time, let us see what can be said on the other side.

Of all the explanations made, the one most favourable to the French, so far as I have heard, came from an American journalist who was generally sympathetic to the French point of view.

He explained that Hughes, in his original plan, had indicated that the capital-ship ratio was to be the basis of the ratio as to submarines and other auxiliary craft; that while the French had no intention of trying to build more capital ships, they had made up their minds to claim a larger ratio of submarines and other auxiliary craft whenever that subject should come up for discussion later on; and that they made their claim for more capital ships at this point as a matter of getting it on the record, so as to pave the way for a larger claim on submarines and other auxiliary craft in due course.

There may be much in this explanation, but at least it is pretty technical. If the French had this motive, and if they had faith in the justification of it, it is surprising they did not give public expression to it at the time. Most clearly, this explanation, if it is correct, shows the French delegates had not grasped the spirit of the Conference. This was the tactics of a bargainer; and Hughes, from the outset, had put the Conference on a plane above bargaining.

However, nearly all that has been said or can be said on this subject is within the field of motive; and motive is an area in which it is most difficult to make deductions that are exact or of certain fairness. What a man's motives may be are largely within the boundaries of his own

heart, and anything that can be said by others is necessarily more or less in the nature of surmise.

Another motive generally attributed to the French for their stand about capital ships was that they wanted to bring Great Britain to a willingness to make an alliance with them covering certain matters in Europe and Asia, and were willing to take at Washington a position of antagonism to what they knew Great Britain wanted, in order to use it as a trading point. This motive was so generally attributed to the French, even by some who were sympathetic to them and believed this motive was justified, that one is compelled to record it as the verdict of, so to speak, the history of the moment.

If this motive is to be accepted as one that moved the French, it leaves them in a pretty unpleasant light. It reveals them as wholly untouched by the mood that had come upon the world, wholly unmoved by the spirit of the Washington Conference and willing to ignore its purpose utterly—willing, in fact, let it fail, if by so doing they could win an advantage for themselves.

There is also, I think, another explanation, an additional explanation, so to speak, of what the French did, an explanation which the French themselves and their friends might hesitate to

put into words but which, nevertheless, has the effect of considerable extenuation for them. I know it is not usual to assign more than one explanation for the same act. History usually assigns a single explanation and lets it go at that. But deeds in the making are rarely as simple as history makes them out. Human actions and human motives are complex, as a rule; and to be animated by a single clear motive is more rare than to be moved by several motives. And while I suspect there can be no doubt that the motives generally attributed to the French at the time had weight in inciting them to what they did, there is a possible other motive, or rather a state of mind, which, while it does not justify the French action, nevertheless may to some degree explain it.

France may well have felt hurt and bitter at being definitely ear-marked as a low fourth among the navies of the world, as being so low that she was in a class apart. She may have resented the picture of the three nations—Great Britain, the United States, and Japan—assigning the navies of the world according to their own judgment. At a later stage in the official debates, M. Sarraut used an eloquently resentful phrase about what the three big nations were doing; he said that the navy which France should have was being "authoritatively deter-

mined" for her. On another occasion, in the gossip of the time, M. Sarraut was reported to have said, *"Nous ne sommes pas le domestiques"* —France is not a servant to be ordered about.

France had memories, very recent memories, memories not eight years old, of a time when she was not in a conspicuously inferior class, a class apart, among the navies of the world.[1] That was only just before the war began. At that time France's navy had a secure position among the big three (the big four, if Germany be included). Before the war, France's navy was much larger than Japan's. It was nearly three times the size of Italy's navy, with which France was now called upon by the Hughes ratio to accept equality. After the war broke out, France practically stopped building warships. She threw all her strength and all her man-power into the battle-front and into the making of munitions. While there was no formal understanding on the point, it was a fact that, by a kind of mutual assent, France devoted all her strength to the war on land, while Great Britain was relied upon to take care of the sea. The

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1 If she chose to throw her memory further back, France could in fact recall a time when she was first on the sea. And, being now self-conscious about her colonial possessions, which make her at present the second colonial power in the world, she might reflect with much point that when she lost her primacy on the sea she found that her great colonies, Canada and India, went with it. France, in short, may well have recalled, in her own mind, a good many things that she did not feel like saying.

result was that during the war Great Britain largely increased her navy while France stood still. The United States and Japan also largely increased their navies. With the immunity from serious sacrifice which Japan enjoyed throughout the entire length of the war, and which America had for the greater part of it, these two nations utilized their resources to build energetically. The effect was that when the Conference met, Great Britain, America, and Japan had the three big navies. Being in that dominant position, they now, in the Conference, took to themselves the privilege of more or less laying down the law, not only for themselves but for others, as to what size of navy each nation should have. It calls for but little imagination to visualize sympathetically the reflections the French may have had about this situation, called upon to accept in future (for fifteen years) a condition of inferiority[1] which had come upon her as the result of sacrifices from which

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[1] One of the French delegates, Admiral de Bon, put this argument eloquently and appealingly in a speech he made in New York before he returned to France. He said:

"How could we have gone back to our own people and told them: 'Think no longer of your past history. France has been great on the sea, but as a consequence of the war which you have just won she is going to disappear from the number of maritime nations. All the glory which your ancestors have reaped on the seas, all the blood they have shed, everything becomes useless. At present you are going to remain without any connection insured and without any safety for your colonies. And in the future for many years to come, as imposed by the Washington Conference, all hope of being restored to your old possessions on the seas must be given up, and France is no more to exist as a naval Power.' "

the others were exempt, Japan wholly and the others partially. Whereas, before the war, France had a navy considerably larger than Japan, she was now called upon by the Hughes ratio to accept for the entire duration of the naval holiday, a navy only a little more than half the size of Japan's. Although, before the war, France's navy was only one eighth smaller than what was then the size of the American navy, France was now called on to be content to be limited in the future to a navy only a shade more than one third as large as that of the United States. France would be compelled to concede, of course, that it was true her present existing navy was even less, much less, in proportion to the others, than the ratio Hughes conceded to her for the future. She must concede that the Hughes plan was generous to her, in that it compelled the three big-navy nations to scrap about forty per cent. of their fleets, without calling on France to scrap anything (in fact, on the contrary, France was permitted to add something to her existing strength.) Nevertheless, while France must concede all this, and must concede that she has not the resources to build a great navy, she may well have felt hurt at her inferiority being reduced to figures, to a definite ratio, and made permanent for the period of the naval holiday—at being formally ear-marked, so to

speak, as a low fourth, in a class apart. Without any Washington Conference France would be free to indulge in dreams, to think that sooner or later she would be able to renew herself economically and restore her place on the sea. But the Hughes plan called on her to face harsh facts, and accept them, and the necessary inferences from them, for a period of years. We can well understand that France's pride may have been touched.

This, it seems to me, might well be given as something reasonably to be said not so much in extenuation of the position that the French delegates to the Conference took, as in explanation of the state of feeling that may have led them to take that position.

VI

What I have written above is really the best case that can be made out for France. After I had written it I was interested to find that this same argument was put forward in the best case that any of the French, so far as I have observed, have made out for themselves. One of the French delegates, Admiral de Bon, when he was in New York on his way home from the Conference, made a speech at a dinner given by some American friends of France. The au-

dience was sympathetic, the Conference was over, the resentment that had arisen in America over what France had done was fully known; there had been time and opportunity to review all that had taken place; and if any convincing plea could be made for France at all, this was the occasion for it. Admiral de Bon's speech, if not finally convincing, was yet appealing, and the most appealing part of it—in fact the burden of it—lay in this argument: that France should not be kept in the position of relative inferiority into which she had fallen as a result of the war. He recited the figures showing what I have already said, that France before the war was not in a class apart, but was among the first four, with a navy approximating that of America, nearly twice that of Japan, and almost three times that of Italy.[1]

But the answer to all this is, there was no other way. Facts are facts, and the harsh fact is that America, Japan, and Great Britain came out of

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1 While this was the burden of Admiral de Bon's argument, and the most appealing part of it, I do not mean to imply that that was the whole of it. He had much to say of France's "maritime needs," which, he claimed, "are indisputably greater than those of Japan;" and he laid emphasis on France's portion as the second colonial empire in the world, and the need of a large navy to protect it. He also implied that the essential difficulty was caused by the actions of America, Japan, and Great Britain—especially the first two, in going ahead on a naval building programme and setting a pace which France has not attempted, and for the present cannot attempt, to follow. A considerable portion of this speech of Admiral de Bon's, I ought to say—the portion in which he attempted to justify the retention of the submarine—did not seem to me appealing at all.

the war with resources adequate, in different degrees, to engage in a naval competition, while France had no such resources. Great Britain, America, and Japan had the resources to build, and were determined to build—and France could not. A naval competition was on, and if that competition had gone ahead, if the Washington Conference had not been called to stop it, or had failed of success in stopping it—then, in that event, France would presently have found herself, not where the Hughes plan left her, with one third as large a navy as America or Great Britain and more than half as large as that of Japan; but rather with one sixth that of America or Great Britain. As Hughes said to Briand: "If such an agreement as we are now proposing should not be made, the United States and Great Britain would shortly have navies of over a million tons each, more than 6 to 1, as compared with France, and France would not be in a position to better herself. . . . In short, the proposed agreement is tremendously in favour of France, by reducing the navies of powers who not only are able to build, but whose ships are actually in course of construction, to a basis far more favourable to France than would otherwise be attainable. The proposed agreement really doubles the relative strength of the French navy."

France was holding out for a sentimental prestige, an empty tradition which she had not the resources to live up to in fact. French writers often claim for their people, as a quality in which they are superior to Anglo-Saxons, the capacity and habit of reality, of looking facts in the face. But the truth is, in the Washington Conference, it was the British who showed the capacity to see facts clearly and accept them calmly. In the Washington Conference, Great Britain yielded, without protest or argument, a tradition infinitely more proud than France's. Great Britain had been mistress of the sea, "unchecked by foe, unshared by friend," for practically two hundred years. But she faced the fact that if there should be a competition in building—if competition were not stopped by the Washington Conference, and if America should go ahead and build to the extent of her resources—then America must supplant her. Great Britain looked that situation in the face, and made the greatest gesture of voluntary renunciation ever made in history.

Hughes did the best he could do, and the best that could be done for France. He took account of the fact that the war had interrupted France's building. He went as far as it was possible to go in making allowance for the relative inferiority in which the war left her. He did not ask

her to come in on the same basis of rearrangement of navies as he asked the others. He demanded that the others should scrap 40 per cent. of their existing strength, but he did not ask France to scrap anything. He allowed her to keep all the ships she now has, and to build a little more. If France had been asked to accept the same basis of allotment as the others, she would have been reduced to 102,000 tons. The actual tonnage allotted to her was 175,000 tons.

I have heard it suggested that Hughes, by some magic of tact, might have managed to save France's *amour propre,* might have devised some way to avoid so definitely ear-marking her as a low fourth among the navies of the world. The suggestion is an appealing one, and if some way could have been found, it would have been a wise and generous thing to do. But while I have heard this suggested as a generalization, I have never heard any one point out a specific means by which it could have been done. Hughes had to accept the facts, just as France had. It has been suggested that it might have been possible to say nothing about France, to leave her where she was, without specifically ear-marking her at 1.75. But that could not have been done. Great Britain would not have been willing to agree to a fixed limitation without

knowing, with equal definiteness, how large a navy France and Italy were going to have. It was very evident, from time to time, that Hughes devoted a good deal of the energy of a brain that was occupied with big things to careful deference to the exceedingly sensitive *amour propre,* individual and national, of the French delegates; but in the matter of fixing the limitation on the size of the French Navy, there was no way he could have done differently from what he did.

VII

However, to resume the course of the narrative: as I have recited, the French delegates, upon orders from Premier Briand, in response to Mr. Hughes's cablegram pointing out that France's attitude meant "success or failure for the Conference," receded from their position on capital ships; and this second crisis in the course of the Hughes plan was safely passed.

CHAPTER VII

FRANCE AND ENGLAND AND THE SUBMARINE

THE capital-ship part of the Hughes plan had slipped safely through the rocks of Anglo-French embroilment. It had been saved at the expense of a good deal of hard feeling, plain speaking, and public excitement—but it was saved.

But shortly after Briand had, by capitulating personally, made it possible to save the day for the capital ships, he lost his premiership at home; and thereafter, under the new régime, the French delegates seemed increasingly indisposed to go along with the Hughes programme. Even before this, at the time when Briand directed the French delegation to give in to Hughes on the capital-ship issue, we were told by some who were close to the French that this action had been resented by the delegates, and that pointed cablegrams had been exchanged. One of the French delegates, M. Sarraut, it appeared, was a person of some consequence in French politics. He was the owner of one of the important provincial newspapers; and by reason of that leverage, and of his position otherwise, he was said

to be able not only to resent dictation by the premier, but even to threaten Briand. All this I recite merely as part of the gossip of the time. It concerned us only indirectly. The relations between Briand and Sarraut, the supplanting of Briand by Poincaré, and the effect of it all on Anglo-French relations—all that was something within the remoter complexities of European politics.

But soon thereafter, when the matter of submarines came up, the position the French delegates took on that subject, and the British resentment of that position, was, for more than a full week, the most spectacular aspect of the Washington Conference.

II

As to submarines, the original Hughes plan, when Hughes first read it at the opening session, contemplated permitting Great Britain and America to have 90,000 tons each, Japan 54,000 tons, and the other powers to keep approximately what they now have. But by the time the Conference got around to acting officially on submarine tonnage, there had been a good deal of agitation; and public opinion had changed in such a way that it was easily possible that the Conference might have concluded to outlaw the

submarine utterly. In America, there was something almost in the nature of an outcry against the tolerance which the Hughes plan seemed to show for this weapon. The *Lusitania* was recalled and the question was asked with eloquent indignation, "Does not America still feel about the submarine as it felt the day after the *Lusitania* was sunk?" Senator Borah stated publicly that, as for him, one of the tests of the Conference would be whether it outlawed the submarine. The New York *Herald* conducted a prolonged campaign against what it called "the viper of the sea." "Is outlaw warfare what the world wants?" the *Herald* asked. "Submarines must go," said Colonel House in a signed editorial in the Philadelphia *Ledger*. A New York *Times* editorial spoke of "the abhorred submarine."

To this outcry from America, Great Britain added its official support. In Balfour's early speech, in which he announced that Great Britain would accept the Hughes plan in spirit and in principle, he specifically mentioned the sanction of submarines as an item about which Great Britain was dubious. The war had given the English public a feeling about the submarine which expressed itself in strong detestation. There was evidence, also, that Hughes had come to modify his own views after he had laid down

the plan. All in all, by the time the Conference reached the point on the agenda where submarines were to be taken up, a situation had arisen out of which it was easily possible that the Conference, by its action on this weapon, might go even beyond what Hughes had originally proposed and thus might give the world the exhilaration of a result yet greater, yet more lofty in its idealism, than the elevated feeling that had been caused by the original Hughes plan.

III

The official action of the Conference on the submarine began with one of the most careful of all the prepared speeches during the whole period. It was made by Lord Lee. That it was convincing was quickly evident. Aside from the eloquent plea he made on moral grounds, there was much in it that was carefully historical and technical.

The net of Lord Lee's argument was that if the submarine were retained, it would be necessary for nations to increase their anti-submarine craft; that "the view of the British Government and the British Empire delegation was that what was required was not merely restrictions on submarines, but their total and final abolition;" [1]

1 These and other quotations are from the official minutes, which were phrased in indirect discourse.

and that Great Britain, as the possessor of "the largest and probably the most efficient equipment of submarines in the world . . . was prepared to scrap the whole of this great fleet, and disband the personnel, provided the other powers would do the same." That, Lord Lee said, was "the British offer to the world," and he expressed the belief that "it was a greater contribution to the cause of humanity than even the limitation of capital ships."

This generous gesture from Lord Lee was so much in the spirit of what the Conference was trying to do that it made a profoundly favourable impression on both the Conference and the public. This speech of Lord Lee, indeed, in many respects, stood second to Hughes's opening speech as the highest point the Conference reached at any time. It was of the same character as the Hughes speech in its swift stride toward the ideals of the Conference. It was one of those moments when the Conference might have leaped the boundaries of its original purpose, might have attained the scope and momentum of something exalted, evangelical. If it had been met by a prompt and equally generous gesture from the others, the Conference might have carried itself and the world to an undreamed elevation.

But the reply of the French spokesman, M.

Sarraut, was in the direction of negation. His attitude was one of coldness and repression to what, starting with Lord Lee's gesture, might have turned into one of the most inspired moments of the Conference, one of the most inspired moments, indeed, in history. But M. Sarraut said, coldly, that this subject of the submarine had already been discussed at the Paris Peace Conference and by the League of Nations; he claimed that "public opinion had shown itself favourable to the continuance of submarines" and therefore "the French delegation felt called upon to give its approval to the use of the submarine under restrictions." [1]

The Italians and the Japanese, in a more qualified way, endorsed the French view. It was well understood, however, that the submarine controversy was essentially between Great Britain and France.

(At this point, I should interject that the quotations which I print here are, in each case,

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1 This quotation is from the official communiqué, made public the following day. In the later version of his reply, published in the report sent to the Senate, M. Sarraut, instead of using the phrase "public opinion," says, "the point of view favouring the inclusion of submarines in the naval forces of states met with the almost unanimous approval of the various governments represented" (at the Paris Conference and the League of Nations meeting). In this version, M. Sarraut expressed his position firmly and clearly in these words: "The French Government cannot consent to accept either the abolition of submarines, or a reduction of the total tonnage of submarines, which it considers to be the irreducible minimum necessary to secure the safety of the territories for which it is responsible, or a limitation of the individual tonnage of submarines."

merely a few sentences detached from speeches that were, in most of the cases, thousands of words long. In making such brief selections, it is always possible to do injustice. It is conceivable that another writer might make selections which would picture the controversy in a somewhat different light. That it was a controversy there need be no doubt. That the French were on the pro-submarine side and the British on the anti-submarine side, there is equally no doubt. That is utterly unmistakable. But it is true that a good many of the arguments made by M. Sarraut and Admiral de Bon, on phases of the controversy other than the direct issue of pro-submarine versus anti-submarine, were expressed in phrases, in which the British found an innuendo of a sort not directly expressed in the words. For the purpose of making the controversy between France and Great Britain clear to the reader, I have, for the most part, accepted the meaning which Mr. Balfour and Lord Lee read into the French speeches. I have read and reread these speeches many times. I have compared the versions given out at the time from day to day in the communiqués, with the later versions—slightly modified and emulsified, in colder after-thought, in the interest of international amity. I have talked with some who were present, or who had knowledge of the

circumstances; and I am satisfied that the quotations I have picked out in order to enable the reader readily to follow the course of the controversy, are accurately representative of the speeches as a whole. Any one who wants to review the controversy for himself can find the speeches in the official communiqués given out from day to day—even these were, I suspect, somewhat softened from the originals as actually spoken; and the revised versions, with a few of the more acerb passages omitted or toned down, in Senate Document Number 126 (67th Congress, second session).

M. Sarraut's reply to Lord Lee's plea had been brief. It was merely in the nature of a statement of the official French position. But the next day, the naval member of the French delegation, Admiral de Bon, made a detailed reply to Lord Lee's argument. Admiral de Bon's speech was a long technical and historical defense of the use of the submarine. He closed it with these words, which call for close reading.

To draw a conclusion from the foregoing, I think that we cannot reasonably limit submarine tonnage, since we have before us an entirely new weapon concerning which no one of us can foresee the possible transformation and growth perhaps in the near future. If, in spite of this idea—which is a menace to no one: first, because no one of us could become the enemy of any other, and secondly,

because we can agree, in mutual confidence, to keep each other informed of our future construction—you wish absolutely to fix a limit to submarine tonnage, I believe that 90,000 tons is the absolute minimum for all the nations who may want to have a submarine force.

Inasmuch as 90,000 tons, which Admiral de Bon named as the "absolute minimum," had actually been, in the original Hughes plan, not the minimum, but in fact, the maximum, Admiral de Bon's speech made a sensation.

Equally sensational was the tone adopted by Mr. Balfour in reply. Mr. Balfour came to his feet in the spirit of accepting a challenge. He was very pointed, indeed. In part of his speech, he was exquisitely ironical, saying: "How shall we think of this encouragement of submarines, these passionate declarations against any interference with the development of this promising weapon of war which is still in its infancy." But later on in his speech, Mr. Balfour took on a seriousness which mere irony would have been inadequate to express. It was in the conclusion of this speech that Mr. Balfour began to talk in such terms that the reader can only infer that by this time he had come to feel that there was between the lines of what the French were saying an innuendo directed at Great Britain. If not at this point, certainly a little later, Mr. Balfour made it abundantly clear that he re-

garded the position of the French delegates on the submarine as "a menace to Great Britain." Mr. Balfour closed this portion of the debate by saying:

> Do not let anybody suppose that we are the people who will suffer most if you decide that submarines are to receive the sanction of this Conference. Do not suppose that, for it is not so. The fate of my own country I look to with serenity in that respect. I admit it may increase our difficulties. I know it will increase our cost, and it will increase it enormously, because we should have to organize all the auxiliary craft against it. But that it will imperil our security I do not believe. I do not know whether all my friends around this table can speak with equal confidence of their position. [1]

By this time the situation was pretty generally recognized as a controversy, which it would not be too much to call bitter, between the French and the British. It went on the next day; in fact, it went on for several days, in the aggregate more than a week. The tension it reached was such that the account of one day's session

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1 I was interested to observe that this part of Mr. Balfour's speech was omitted from the official minutes that were transmitted to the Senate by Mr. Hughes at the close of the Conference. I assume that this official second-thought softening of the spontaneous acerbity of the occasion was done in the interest of international amity. There was a good deal of this rewriting of the minutes. M. Sarraut, at the end of one of the more acrimonious sessions, said that "the French delegation deemed it their duty to revise the somewhat copious report of the preceding session before publishing the same." On one occasion the newspaper men reported that they were obliged to wait for the official communiqué while M. Sarraut worked far into the night revising, and, I presume, softening his remarks in the direction of less acerbity.

was described by so chaste a newspaper as the Boston *Transcript* under the headline "Sarraut and Balfour Mix It Up on Undersea Warfare."

This part of the debate was so overlaid with the diplomatic elegancies which aim to conceal enough, but not too much, of the barb that is at the bottom; so shot through with cryptic talking about "A" when you mean and want your adversary to know you really mean "B"—it was so full of this sort of thing that it is difficult to make it clear to the distant reader. It is difficult, in fact, for me to be sure that I have grasped it with complete accuracy, or that I picture it fairly. M. Sarraut kept talking about the nations not represented at the Conference—he said that if they were denied the use of the submarine, they might feel that some big nations were imposing their wills on them. But as to just what specific nations M. Sarraut had in mind, Mr. Balfour quickly and forcefully made concrete deductions. M. Sarraut had said:

> The day when these peoples begin to think that we are likely to make use of moral constraint to impose on them our way of thinking—and I venture to emphasize this idea at the present moment, when the susceptibilities of nations should be carefully considered—I would be sorry to see grow up once more, around the beneficial work that we are accomplishing here, certain legends and even cer-

tain calumnies distorting the trend of our purposes, like those from which we, the French, have suffered and that we have seen only recently used against France in the press, representing her in an imperialistic attitude. It must not be permitted that such campaigns misinterpreting our true sentiments should be initiated against any one of us, France, Great Britain, Japan, and so forth. If certain ones among us preserve more or less naval forces, and if we, at the same time, forbid other peoples not represented here the right to procure for themselves those smaller but still efficacious weapons of defense which they believe they need, might not the legends to which I have referred tempt them to think that other more powerful countries wish to keep them in subjection, to force them to place themselves under their protection and to retain them in a sort of vassalage?

Those were M. Sarraut's words. If they were susceptible of any esoteric interpretation, the reader, distant from the Conference, will be handicapped in supplying that interpretation. Probably Mr. Balfour was as well equipped as anybody could be to know just what the French were driving at. And if you accept Mr. Balfour's interpretation, then, in plainer words and shorter, M. Sarraut was telling Mr. Balfour that Britain was trying to say how big a navy France could have, and that France didn't propose to stand for it. This sentiment was not expressed in M. Sarraut's words; but Mr. Balfour evidently inferred it from his manner.

Mr. Balfour put this interpretation on M. Sarraut's words, and replied with great directness—with a pointedness, in fact, that had now become frankly the atmosphere of the controversy. Mr. Balfour reminded France that she had already compelled the Conference to abandon the subject of land armament. He said that nobody could look upon the situation without saying that if France was determined to build a large submarine navy, the target of that determination, and of the submarines themselves must be Great Britain. He asked:

> Against whom is this submarine fleet being built? What purpose is it to serve? What danger to France is it intended to guard against? I know of no satisfactory answer to such questions. . . . Great Britain is strong enough to defend herself, and she wants nothing more than to defend herself. . . . I am certainly not going to be prevented from doing my best to induce this great moral reform in the use of weapons of war by the fear that the actions of myself and my friends around me can even, by the bitterest and most unscrupulous calumny, be darkened by the sort of shadows which M. Sarraut seems to think the ingenuity of the calumniator is able to spread over mankind.

To this M. Sarraut replied that he was astonished at the interpretation put upon what he had said about the imputations and fears which might be inspired in small nations. "Nothing I have

said," he exclaimed, "is especially aimed against Great Britain."

IV

At this point Mr. Hughes took a hand. He said it was apparent that it was not possible to reach an agreement on submarines. While he spoke in a judicial tone, Mr. Hughes's words left no doubt that he had been strongly impressed by the arguments of Lord Lee and Mr. Balfour. "If those arguments could be answered," Mr. Hughes said, "that answer has yet to come." [1] He expressed the belief that even though the Conference was prevented from taking official action, nevertheless, the words of

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1 I have said that by this time Mr. Hughes had come to modify his view about submarines, which, in his original plan, he had tolerated; and I have said that but for the stand the French now took, the Conference might have leaped the bounds of that original plan and might have outlawed the submarine utterly. Against this it is to be said that both the naval advisers of the American Delegation and also the American Advisory Committee of Twenty-one had made recommendations against outlawing the submarine. The French made much of this point. There is not much in it, however. The spontaneous expressions of detestation for the submarine throughout America had more weight than the recommendations of these official advisers. Also, while these official American advisers recommended that the submarine be kept, they made no recommendation that would justify the French in claiming the large quantity that they insisted on. I still believe that it was the French stand that was responsible for preventing the abolition of the submarine.

Also, it was said by some of the French sympathizers that Hughes's coming around to disapproval of the submarine was due to British diplomacy. There was nothing in that. Mr. Hughes's modification of his position can be accounted for by the outcry in the American press, and in other influential American quarters, against his retention of the submarine in his original plan.

Also, it should be said that there is nowhere in the record a direct statement from Mr. Hughes that he had come to favour abolition of the submarine. But it is a fair deduction from the tone of many of his indirect allusions to the submarine that he had undergone this change of view.

Lord Lee and Mr. Balfour would carry far beyond the walls of the Conference room, and would powerfully influence the development of public opinion throughout the world.

Neither did Mr. Hughes leave any doubt that he had been shocked by the French proposal to raise the limit on submarines to a minimum of 90,000 tons—the figure which in his own plan had actually been maximum. With pointed irony he reminded the French that this was a Conference for limitation of armaments, not for expansion.

In order to get somewhere, Mr. Hughes now made an alternative proposal that 60,000 tons should be adopted as the maximum. This would involve the necessity of the United States scrapping 35,000 tons and Great Britain scrapping 32,000 tons. As to France, Japan, and Italy, Mr. Hughes's proposal was that they should retain all the submarine tonnage they now have. He made this suggestion in a manner which indicated that his purpose was to show that so far as the American Government was concerned it was ready to reduce from what it now has without asking France to make any reduction from where it now is.

The reply of the French to this proposal was a guarded statement that they would cable it to their government and wait for instructions.

The following day, the Conference got the formal answer from France. It began with many elegant preliminaries. M. Sarraut said there had been a meeting of the French Cabinet and of the French Supreme Council of National Defense; that they had "the most earnest desire" to help and that this desire had been carried out in their giving up the right to build more capital ships. After a good deal of this sort of declamation, M. Sarraut ended with a startling statement of the official French position. He said that France would not be willing to accept a limitation below 90,000 tons for submarines. Then he went on and said he had been instructed further by his government to say that France would not be willing to accept a limitation of less than 330,000 tons for auxiliary craft.[1]

[1] The official positions of Great Britain and France on the submarine, as given out later by Mr. Hughes, were these: The French position, as stated by Mr. Sarraut was:

> "After examining, on the other hand, the composition of the forces needed by France in auxiliary craft and submarines, which are specially intended for the protection of her territory and its communications, the Cabinet and the Supreme Council of National Defense, have reached the conclusion that it is impossible to accept a limitation below that of 330,000 tons for auxiliary craft and 90,000 tons for submarines, without imperilling the vital interests of the country and of its colonies and the safety of their naval life. The French delegation has been instructed to consent to no concession on the above figures."

The British position as put formally on the records was:

> "The British Empire Delegation desires formally to place on record this opinion that the use of submarines whilst of small value for defensive purposes, leads inevitably to acts which are inconsistent with the laws of war and the dictates of humanity, and the delegation desires that united action should be taken by all nations to forbid their maintenance, construction, or employment."

The French were not only going to insist on 90,000 tons of submarines, but were going to be equally extreme with respect to other auxiliary craft. Mr. Hughes remarked, with a manner that was somewhere between broad irony and spontaneous indignation, that this "could hardly be called a limitation or a reduction," and that "an agreement for the expansion of armament was not under consideration. The Conference was called to consider the limitation of armament."

Mr. Balfour was equally pointed and direct. He said that if the French should carry out this intention, they would not only be equal to the other two greatest naval powers, America and Britain,[1] in point of submarine tonnage, but that they would have a very much larger proportion of submarines of a newer type than either of the others. The French quota of submarines, he said, would exceed that of any other power in the world. With fine irony, he said that this "constitutes a somewhat singular contribution to the labours of a Conference called for the limitation of armament. Considered in conjunction with the refusal of the French delegation to discuss land armament, this position must cause anxiety and disappointment to those who had

[1]Mr. Balfour customarily used the word "Britain," rather than "Great Britain."

come to the Conference with high hopes regarding the limitation of navies. We should have the melancholy spectacle of a conference called for the limitation of armament resulting in a vast increase in the very weapon which the most civilized elements in all civilized countries condemn."

As to Great Britain, Mr. Balfour said it was perfectly clear that "public notice had now been given in the most formal manner that this great fleet was to be built on the shores nearest to Britain, and it would necessarily be a very great menace to her." For this reason, Mr. Balfour said that he "reserved the full right of Britain to build any auxiliary craft which she considered necessary to deal with the situation."

By this time it was obvious to Mr. Hughes, of course, that nothing could be done about submarine limitation, and that as to other auxiliary craft France was going to take the position of enlarging rather than diminishing the total quantity of it. Out of this situation Mr. Hughes tried to salvage something by proposing a limit to the size of individual auxiliary ships. He introduced a formal resolution to the effect that "no ship of war, other than the capital ships or aircraft carriers hereafter built, shall exceed a total tonnage displacement of 10,000 tons, and no guns shall be carried by any such ship with a calibre in excess of eight inches."

To this proposal M. Sarraut did not reply directly, but he spoke in what had come to be his complaining tone of other powers trying to "authoritatively determine" how large a navy France should have.

V

At this point Mr. Root entered the situation. On several critical occasions in the Conference, Mr. Root seemed to have the rôle he now adopted. After everybody had got into a snarl, after there had been a head-on collision between antagonistic propositions, Mr. Root came in, so to speak, from the side, at right angles to the collision, with a proposal designed to achieve much the same ends but so different in detail from the question at issue that it was free from the bitterness of feeling with which the question, as it originally arose, had become involved. Mr. Root introduced four resolutions which, while they did not affect the quantity of submarines any nation might have, nevertheless surrounded the use of those submarines with such restrictions that their effectiveness would be greatly reduced.

The French response to these resolutions was stated by Admiral de Bon. It was to the effect that since the Root resolutions were of "a very special nature," it therefore seemed to Admiral

de Bon "that the most practical solution would be to refer the consideration of the text submitted by Mr. Root to a committee of jurists, which would advise us as to its opinion in regard to the wording to be adopted."

But Mr. Root was not to be satisfied with any such dilatory disposal of his resolutions. No committee of jurists for him. It was on this occasion that Mr. Root made one of the best speeches of the Conference. Among other things, he said:

> Now with regard to the proposal to refer this matter to a committee of lawyers, far be it from me to say anything derogatory to the members of the profession of which I have been a humble member for more years than I care to remember. They are the salt of the earth; they are the noblest work of God; they are superior in intellect and authority to all other people whatsoever. But both this Conference and my own life are approaching their termination. I do not wish these resolutions to be in the hands of a commission, even of lawyers, after we adjourn.
>
> This Conference was called for what? For the limitation of armament. But limitation is not the end, only the means. It is the belief of the world that this Conference was convened to promote the peace of the world —to relieve mankind of the horrors and the losses and the intolerable burdens of war.
>
> We cannot justify ourselves in separating without some declaration that will give voice to the humane opinion of the world upon this subject, which was the most vital, the most heartfelt, the most stirring to the conscience and to

the feeling of the people of all our countries of anything that occurred during the late war. I feel to the depth of my heart that the man who was responsible for sinking the Lusitania committed an act of piracy. I know that all my countrymen with whom I have had intercourse feel the same, and I should be ashamed to go on with this Conference without some declaration, some pronouncement, which will give voice to the feeling and furnish an opportunity for the crystallization of the opinion of mankind in the establishment of a rule which will make it plain to all the world that no man can commit such an act again without being stigmatized as a pirate.

In this stand Mr. Root was warmly seconded by Mr. Hughes. He said that he did not want these resolutions to "be overlaid with lawyers' niceties."

Ultimately the Root resolutions were adopted. They have the effect of greatly restricting the use that may be made of the submarine in war. Also certain other rather important limitations were salvaged—on the size of individual auxiliary craft, on the size of airship carriers, and the size of guns.

VI

But the net result of the discussion over submarines and other auxiliary craft was that the French were firmly fixed in the public mind as

obstructionists (the more colloquial word, used by many, was "trouble-makers"). They had prevented the Conference from putting any limitation on the quantity of submarines or on the quantity of other auxiliary craft. These made a pretty big hole in the Conference agenda. Coupled with what she had already done about land armament, and had tried to do about capital ships, it is not surprising that France found herself in a position which her own newspapers described as "moral isolation."

CHAPTER VIII

FRANCE AT WASHINGTON

WHAT France did at the Conference is a subject as to which it is not easy to pass judgment. Those who have prejudices one way or the other have found it simple to arrive quickly at an attitude of either thoroughgoing condemnation or of apology. I found myself from time to time sharing the feeling that France was "acting ugly" and that she made threats of actions which would have rendered the Conference a failure.[1] But at the same time I kept constantly recalling some facts and conditions which, while they do not justify what France did, nor even go far toward condoning it, nevertheless go some distance toward explaining the causes for the state of feeling the French delegates showed.

II

During the months of October and November, America acclaimed Marshal Foch in a triumphal

[1] The phrase Hughes used in his cablegram to Briand calling on France to recede from her stand on capital ships was: "You will observe the attitude of France will determine the success or failure of this effort to reduce the heavy burden of naval armament."

tour from coast to coast, and presented him, among other evidences of honour and esteem, with twenty-nine college degrees, a baby wildcat and several trunkfuls of other trinkets, and an honorary membership in the New York Bricklayers' Union. These things are not picked out for mention for purposes of satire, but rather because they were typical American expressions of regard for Foch and France on the part of all elements of the American public. On the day the Washington Conference began, France had the strongest sort of hold on American feeling.

But on January 31st, during the closing week of the Conference, the French Ambassador to Washington, M. Jusserand, in words that reflected his awareness of a completely reversed state of feeling in America about France, said:

> In the course of the last few weeks the country that I have represented in America for nearly twenty years has been censured with extreme severity and I might use another word. The letters [1] I have been receiving, the articles I have read, the conversations in which I have taken part—all this shows a very grave, serious misunderstanding is persisting in the minds of many as to the ideas of France, her fate, and her aspirations.

Now, obviously, the thing that intervened be-

[1] It was said, in the Washington gossip of the time, that among other forms of disapproval of the actions of the French delegations, some Americans were threatening to withhold their support of various French charities.

tween November and February, the conditions which caused a change from a generous, almost an exalted, good will toward France to a serious irritation against her, arose during and out of the Washington Conference.

III

In the description of the opening session of the Conference, in Chapter I, I called attention to two incidents which illustrate the state of mind in which the French from the very beginning seemed to be. One was the lack of gratification which the French delegates showed at finding themselves around the corner from the top table; and I said that at all of the subsequent plenary sessions the seats had been shuffled so as to permit the head of the French delegation to have a seat at the top table.

Now the fact is that the original seating of the delegates was strictly according to the precedent of the Paris Conference, and was strictly according to the rules that govern such details. It is a minute matter, a thing within the world of the more meticulous details of diplomatic intercourse, and I should hesitate to burden this narrative with so much about it were it not for the fact that it was just such incidents as these that showed the prevailing state of mind of the French delegates. I had the feeling at the time.

and still have it, that there was something grotesque in the fact that men like Mr. Hughes and the others, engaged upon one of the greatest adventures in altruism in all history, should be compelled at all times to keep their brains alert and on guard about such a matter as the seating at the table and about ceremonial minutiæ, should be constantly under apprehension lest the immense task they were engaged upon be endangered by some minute matter arising out of an excessively sensitive *amour propre* on the part of some who were participating.

I have said that the original seating at the table was strictly according to the diplomatic rule. That rule is that the representatives of nations engaged in a conference like that at Washington shall be seated alphabetically. In the diplomatic alphabet the name of the United States is not the "United States" but "America" —in French "Amerique." (Many years ago the official diplomatic title of the United States was the French equivalent "Etats Unis;" at that time our letter was "E." But some time about the presidency of Rutherford B. Hayes, the official designation of the United States became "America" or "Amerique.") America's alphabetic designation being "A," we head the list at all such gatherings. After us comes Great Britain. Great Britain's diplomatic designation

is not "Great Britain" but "British Empire," so that her letter is "B," and she comes second. France, with the letter "F" comes third; Italy, according to the alphabetical order, comes fourth, and Japan, fifth. (I am speaking now of the five powers who composed the Conference for all purposes, and am not including the additional four powers who were in the Conference for the limited function of participating in discussions on the Far East.)

The seating at the table was strictly according to this alphabetical order. Mr. Hughes, as the presiding officer, sat at the middle of the top table, with the other three American delegates on his right; at his left were the British delegates; next on the right came the French delegates; next on the left came the Italian delegates, and last on the right came the Japanese delegates.

But it so happened, that the table were arranged in the form of a rectangle, and that the number of seats at the top end of the rectangle was just seven. This being the case, it resulted that all the seats at the top table were taken up by the delegates of America and Great Britain, and that the seats of the French delegates were just around the corner from the top table. It was this that caused the lack of gratification of the French. At all the subsequent

plenary sessions following the first, in order to give the French one place at the top table, all of the seven seats were moved one seat to the left. The result was that Ambassador Geddes, the third of the British delegates, was moved around the corner of the table to the left. There was nothing extraordinary about this; but another result of the shifting of seats illustrated in a striking way the wish of the Conference to accommodate itself to the sensitiveness of the French delegates. At all of the subsequent plenary sessions, the presiding officer, Mr. Hughes, sat, not at the middle of the top table, which was the natural place for the presiding officer, but one seat to the left of the middle.

How essentially immaterial all this was can be illustrated by the fact that if the Conference table had been in the shape of a letter "U," had been rounded at the corners, the French would have had no occasion to make objection. The mere fact that a triangular corner of pine board, not more than a few inches in dimensions, projected between the French delegation and the American delegation, made all the trouble.

If I have gone to such lengths to describe so minor a thing in such minute detail, it is only because this was the sort of thing that seemed to have much to do with the state of mind of the French delegates. They seemed at all times to

be in that mood, that uneasiness of temperament, which New England folks frequently describe as "in a state."

I have mentioned also, in the first chapter, the insistence of the French delegates on the prerogative of their tongue as the language of diplomacy. There were repeated instances of this, some of them so meticulous that, if recited here, they would seem a little absurd to an American reader giving thought to the heart of what the Conference was doing, rather than to the infinitesimal diplomatic niceties upon which the French seemed intent. The French delegates seemed constantly on the lookout for slights. Some of the French newspaper men reflected this state of mind. Toward the end of the first week of the Conference, one of the French correspondents cabled his paper that "except as common guests at a dinner party, Balfour and Briand have not met." About the same time, a despatch from Paris to America said that "the French press shows disappointment at the nation's comparative effacement." Another despatch from Paris described the French as "angry at being left out in the cold." Another French newspaper complained that the French delegates at Washington "were out of the picture." All this reflected a persistent feeling on the part of some of the French delegates that

they were not being treated very well. In that part of the world of Washington which has to do with dinners and receptions there was a constant buzz of gossip and stories reflecting wounded feelings on the part of the French as to the relative importance of the places they were given at table, and the like. This kind of thing persisted to the end of the Conference. On the social and ceremonial side of the Conference, the whole feeling of the French seemed to be one of continuously wounded self-esteem. These stories about wounded self-esteem on the part of the French were no more numerous than the stories of Americans who found it difficult to account for some of the things the French delegates did. The Americans, from Mr. Hughes down to the last hostess in Washington, wanted to be punctilious in showing deference to the French, and were always giving thought to their dignity and *amour propre*. The response that some of the French made to this effort at meticulous consideration was, in many cases, as likely to cause hurt surprise to the Americans, certainly, as anything we could have done, or failed to do, to the French. In many cases some of the French showed themselves ready to take offense to a degree which, it is not too much to say, made them seem a little ridiculous according to American standards of give-and-take among men and na-

tions.[1] Possibly some of the French delegates were not of the kind of personality that easily ignores small things. During the war, in some cases, men became symbols, and we attributed to them as symbols a quality they did not have in their own persons. Possibly, also, the quality of the adulation we had given Foch in his triumphal tour just before the Conference began may have led some others to expect a little more for themselves than it occurred to us to give. Possibly some of the French delegates may have exaggerated the place that what is called Washington society has in American life, and may have overestimated, in one direction or the other, either the assurances or the slights that they received or thought they received, in those quarters. But everything that happened in what may be called a social way can be omitted; and it still remains a fact that in their official relations to the Conference, some of the French delegates showed themselves rather more intent upon considerations of dignity and prerogative than on the great purpose of the gathering.

IV

But aside from sensitiveness of individuals, there is a sensitiveness of nations. France was

[1] One of the French delegates came to be referred to as "Peevish Papa Pettingill."

invited to a Conference in which she was outranked by three nations. As to these three nations, France, historically, has been the equal of one—Great Britain; and as to the others has been superior. When France was one of the two great Powers of the world, America was merely a few millions of colonial "roughnecks," and Japan was as unconsidered a factor as Siam or Swat. That France may have felt pained by this change in her relative status can be understood. It does not justify what she did, but to a degree it explains it. France is the "new poor" among the nations. America and Japan are the "new rich." France has all the sensitiveness of the new poor. She is the beneficiary of a great quantity of organized charity on the part of America. She is our "poor relation," and has the pride that frequently goes with that position. Out of these conditions may have arisen some of the causes why the French at the Conference seemed always to be in a state of sensitiveness about their dignity and prerogatives.

V

There are many possible points at which to begin a consideration of the relations between France and America. You might go as far back as Lafayette and consider how grateful we ought

to be to France, how tolerant of the things she is doing now that make her what she would call "difficile." Or you might leap a century or so, and begin with what we did for France during the recent war; and consider how grateful she ought to be, and how much under obligations to be helpful to our present adventure in idealism.

But the best place to find at least one root of what happened between France and America at the recent Conference is at the Paris Peace Conference.

At that Conference, France wanted certain definite, concrete things, in the way of boundaries and the like, which would make her—or which she thought would make her—secure against Germany in the future. Mr. Wilson persuaded France to give up these things. Mr. Wilson was eager to initiate the League of Nations, and he tried to persuade France to trust her future to that institution. France was unwilling; and then Wilson promised her a military guarantee through a treaty to be signed by America and Britain. Thereafter, America did not go on with the assurances that President Wilson held out to the French. Whether Wilson went too far in his promises, or whether the American Senate was justified in refusing to ratify those promises—all that has been the subject of some millions of words of debate. So

far as France is concerned, it does not matter which is the answer. Either is the same to France. France did not know, or certainly did not take account of, the fact that an American President's undertaking in a matter of foreign relations is not valid until the American Senate has ratified it. She has learned it by now; but in the meantime she has been shocked and embarrassed by our refusal to give either of the things that Wilson led her to rely on. We refused to enter the League of Nations, and we refused to ratify the treaty of guarantee. For that action on the part of the United States, France has a title to almost any degree of resentment she may care to feel or express, has a right to generous tolerance from us from almost anything she may do of the sort we describe as "acting ugly."

It was because we broke the solemn promises our President made to her that France finds excuse—some of it justified—in maintaining her big army. And it was because of her big army that France came to Washington in a mood ready to be truculent. She knew that her maintenance of her big army was repugnant to the spirit of the Conference and inconsistent with the order Harding was trying to bring into the world. She was aware that her refusal—she knew in advance, of course, that she was go-

ing to refuse—to permit land armament to be considered would make a big hole in the Conference agenda. She knew, in short, that she was coming to a Conference of which the atmosphere must necessarily be, as to her, somewhat accusatory. However polite and considerate we might be, the French delegates would always be uneasily conscious that we would think of her as failing to help, as unwilling to play the game.

That state of mind, that expectancy of accusation, implied or expressed, is just the mood in which men and nations are sensitive to slights, and ready to feel them even where they are not.

However, all this is going rather deep into antecedent history. The facts of record which, on this point, are the essential part of the narrative of the Washington Conference, are: that the French delegates prevented the consideration of land armament; that the French delegates took a position about capital ships which would have made the Conference a complete failure, and only receded after Hughes "put it up" to the French premier that the action of that country would "determine the success or failure of this effort to reduce the heavy burden of naval armament;" that the French delegates made any limitation on the quantity of submarines impossible; and that the French delegates made

any limitation on the quantity of auxiliary craft impossible.

Those were the specific actions of the French delegates. One might say of all of them what Balfour said of the one action on submarines, that they "constituted a singular contribution to a conference called to limit armament."

The delegates of France never seemed to share the spirit of the Conference. In their self-centered intentness upon their *amour propre* they were cut off from the emotion of exaltation that gripped the Conference and the world. When the whole world was star-eyed in pursuit of the great adventure, the delegates of France were thinking of their place at the table.

CHAPTER IX

THE FOUR-POWER TREATY

ONE of the most competent reporters of the Washington Conference, Miss Ida Tarbell, speaking of the four-power treaty, said that "watching this treaty emerge was like watching a ship come out of a thick fog." It is a fact that this portion of the Conference's work came to the observers as a surprise, and its dawning was attended by much rumour and surmise, and, at one period, by some public excitement. The reason for the atmosphere of surprise lay in the fact that the four-power treaty was not on the agenda; nor was the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, which the four-power treaty was designed to terminate. The Conference was one of five powers as to naval matters; and, as to Far Eastern matters, one of nine powers. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance was a matter to which only two powers were directly parties; and such a subject could not well be put on the agenda of a conference of a larger number of powers. This is the chief reason why the four-power treaty came to most of the ob-

servers as a surprise. Their minds were intent on the agenda. They were following it from subject to subject as the Conference took the various points up. Moreover, at the time, the Conference was busy with land armament, with naval armament, and with various matters affecting China. We were all following what the Conference was doing on these subjects, and did not realize that such a thing as the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, and the effort to find some way of terminating it, was "in the works." Every well-informed person knew that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance had been a matter of discussion between the British and Japanese governments, knew that the American Government had informed the British Government that we looked upon the termination of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance as a matter of importance. But no one knew the subject was coming to a head so soon. Our minds were intent upon what we regarded as the great adventure of the Conference, the immense, historic effort to agree upon self-imposed limitations on naval armament; and this four-power treaty was something a little aside from that.

In truth, while this treaty was "in the works," it was rather in the background. It was carried on by the heads of the delegations as something additional to the rest of the Conference's work.

It did not bulk so large in the work of the Conference as it later did in the Senate debate. The time put upon it was relatively small. It was completed and read to the world exactly four weeks to the hour after the Conference first met; and during those four weeks it had consumed relatively little of the time of the men who made it. Most of the time, and most of the delay which created an atmosphere of suspense between the first rumours and the final fulfilment —most of that was due to the delay in the necessary cabling to Japan and France. At this particular time, the cable to Japan was so choked that it took almost a week for the Japanese delegates to cable their home government and get the answer.

However, to try to picture the thing to the reader as it appeared to the observer at the time:

The first to get the clue was a Japanese reporter who cabled it to his paper in Tokio, whence it went round the other side of the world and came back to us via London. America received it as a rumour so surprising as to be dubious. A few days later, the American newspaper men learned that on December 4th a British correspondent had sent to his paper in London a confident prediction and more or less detailed description of what was then expected to be a three-power treaty. So closely had the

secret been guarded from the American newspapers, and so skeptical were they, that when, under an arrangement common during the Conference, a duplicate of the despatch to London was filed with one of the New York papers, the latter not only did not print it, but actually printed an article discounting the rumour.

To American newspaper men who had come to apprehend that something important and unusual was going on, and who made pressing inquiries, the reply from the spokesman of the American delegation was that he could not discuss anything except accomplished facts. It was apparent that the preparation of the treaty was being carried on under mutual pledges of secrecy, and that the American end of the pledge was being kept rather more carefully than the others. By about the 6th of December, however, definite predictions began to appear in the American papers of, first, a three-power treaty, and later, a four-power treaty.[1]

Through all of this it was evident that Mr. Hughes felt some embarrassment. Day after day, the American spokesman was questioned by the newspaper men, and day after day the answer was that nothing could be said yet. (The delay was due chiefly to waiting on the

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1 France was taken into the group some time after the beginning.

crowded and belated cable to Japan and also to waiting for approval from France.[1])

Finally, late one evening, the conditions were fulfilled, and the messages received that completed the treaty and permitted it to be made known to the public. It was as late as nine o'clock that night that the newspaper men suddenly learned there would be an open session the next day. Washington, and America as a whole, did not learn it until they saw it announced somewhat sensationally in the morning papers. Mr. Hughes's assistants worked all night on the seating and other preparations; and at eleven on Saturday morning, the 10th, we came together at the fourth plenary session to hear the treaty read.

II

I find that in my notes I spoke of that fourth plenary session, somewhat facetiously, as "Massachusetts' Day" because it was Senator Lodge's chance to shine. And Senator Lodge did shine. He was obviously proud of the occasion and proud of his part in it. A little later on he got some of the drawbacks that occasionally go

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1 In some quarters the gossip of the time said that a difficulty arose over whether the Anglo-Japanese treaty should be said to be "terminated," or "superseded." The former word would be more acceptable to American feeling, the latter to Japanese and British. The word finally used in the completed draft of the treaty was "terminated." All this is said here merely as a contribution to unverified gossip.

with pride, but for the day he was very proud indeed. I do not know how much part Senator Lodge had in the actual negotiation of the treaty. I suspect the major part of the negotiations was in the hands of what we occasionally called the "Big Three," Hughes, Balfour, and Kato. In any event, it was Senator Lodge who was given the distinction of reading the treaty to the world.

There is something about the configuration of Senator Lodge's whiskers, coupled with a somnolently and contentedly blinking quality his eyes frequently have when he is in repose, that makes you think of a venerable cat of the male sex who not only has just eaten a plump canary and is, for the moment, engaged in the delectable digestion thereof; but also has the additional satisfaction of mind, the anticipatory pleasure of seeing ahead of him a long line of more canaries especially provided for his comfort and delight. In short, there are occasions when Senator Lodge gives you the impression of having weighed the world and himself, and the relation of the two to each other, and found the whole quite edifying.

This was one of the occasions. A week or two later there came a time when Senator Lodge had reason to be less completely composed over his part in what had happened this day; but, for the moment, he was very, very happy.

Mr. Hughes, after getting rid of some routine matters, arose and said: "I now ask Senator Lodge to present a matter not on the agenda."

(I ask the reader to notice particularly the words with which Mr. Hughes introduced the subject of the four-power treaty, "a matter not on the agenda." Hardly anyone paid particular attention to them, or understood them as conveying any important distinction; I am sure I did not, although I was following everything as closely as any outsider could. For that matter, the implication conveyed by the phrase was not important in any essential sense; but I ask the reader to bear them in mind, because remembering this distinction will make more clear what I shall later try to explain about the fundamental nature of the four-power treaty, and how it came about.)

Senator Lodge arose. He spoke briefly of his personal gratification at the honor accorded him and then read the text of the treaty.

Having read the treaty, Senator Lodge then delivered an exposition of it. In the course of that exposition, he did what has come to be almost an obsession with him. He took a backhanded slap at the League of Nations, saying:

> There is no provision for the use of force to carry out any of the terms of the agreement, and no military or

naval sanction lurks anywhere in the background or under cover of these plain and direct clauses.

From that, Senator Lodge departed from international law, and entered upon a poetic and literary description of the isles of the Pacific. This was rather unusual in a conference so directly and exclusively occupied with matters of state and international law. Nevertheless, I think the practically universal emotion on the part of the audience was one of pleasure. I know that was my impression. I find my own notes read: "This literary background is one of the most charming things about Lodge. He quotes Stevenson and Browning, and refers to Melville. It is agreeably scholarly, and, in an attractive way, a little old-fashioned. Mr. Lodge does it all very well."

Some of this literary part of Senator Lodge's speech is worth quoting, in the light of the satire of which it became the subject a week or two later, when an unexpected and embarrassing development called pointed attention to certain matters of substance and law about the treaty, which Senator Lodge had neglected to explain —the neglect being due, in the view of the satirists, to the fact that so much of Senator Lodge's time had been occupied with literary description of the isles of the Pacific:

We have probably heard of the remark of Robert Louis Stevenson when, on leaving one of the Pacific Islands, he was asked how he was going to Samoa. He replied that he should just go out and turn to the left. These islands are, comparatively speaking, so dense that we might describe them in the words of Browning as the

> "sprinkled isles,
> Lily on lily, that o'er-lace the sea."

And yet the region through which they are scattered is so vast that the Isles of Greece and the Ægean Sea, so famous in history and in poetry, could easily be lost therein and continue unnoticed except by wandering seamen or stray adventurers. They range from Australia, continental in magnitude, to atolls, where there are no dwellers but the builders of the coral reefs or lonely rocks marking the peak of mountains which rise up from the ocean's floor through miles of water before they touch the air. To the Eastern and the Western world alike most of the islands of the Southwestern Pacific are little known; there still lingers about them the charm so compelling and so fascinating which an undiscovered country has for the sons of men who are weary of main traveled roads and the trampled highways of trade and commerce which cover the surface of the patient earth. Upon these islands still shines the drama of romance in the stories of Melville and the writings of Robert Louis Stevenson, to whom the South Seas gave both a grave and a monument imperishable as his own fame.[1]

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[1] Some of those who smiled at Mr. Lodge about this descent into literature, and pictured him as telling his secretary to bring the dictionary of quotations and dig out a few couplets about the isles of the Pacific, were quite wrong. It was most natural for a man of

After getting through with this literary portion of his address, Mr. Lodge closed his speech with an appeal which was entirely adequate to the spirit of the occasion, but which had no particular point or direction. He talked in a general way about preventing war by appealing to "the hearts, the sympathies, the reason, and the higher impulses of mankind," and about the "faith of nations;" but he said not a word about what was the essential heart and purpose of the treaty, nor did he allude at all to a second feature of it which was the subject of most of the excitement that later arose about the treaty. In short, Senator Lodge acted like what was probably his real rôle, that of a man who had merely been entrusted with reading the treaty and introducing it, rather than like one who had actually gone through the negotiations from the beginning. If Hughes had made this introduction and explanation of the treaty himself, or if Lodge had been in Hughes's place, and had ac-

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Lodge's quality to take this turn. Senator Lodge has a right to secure standing among men of letters. Not only has he written books of high credit. He has a true sense of literary values, and a discriminating taste which critics appreciate. In public life he has made himself, in a quiet way that the public generally does not know, the custodian of the interests of writers. He maintains contact with them, and this association is his principal avocation. There are writers, of the highest class, who, on their trips to Washington, regard a visit to Lodge as one of the greatest of their pleasures. I am told that persons who have read many of Lodge's private letters to authors, and about books, feel that these letters, if collected, would make a worthy volume of literary criticism.

tually lived through the negotiations, this speech might have gone more directly and clearly to the heart of the instrument, and a good deal that occurred later might not have happened. What was later charged as lack of candour in Lodge was not really that at all. He had merely not happened to have taken a sufficiently direct and continuous part in the negotiations, to be the best man to talk about it. However—

After Lodge had presented the treaty and made his speech, the others were called upon. Viviani did not address himself very directly to the treaty. He was even more remote from it than Lodge. He took the occasion to talk about France. There were some eloquent passages in Viviani's speech, as when he said:

> France has never declined to stand by her plighted word. And when there has been a question of either standing by her pledged word and honouring her signature, or taking arms, France has not hesitated to seal with the blood of her own children the treaties to which she had appended her name, and she has kept faith.

But for the most part Viviani's speech was about the late war. I find I wrote in my notes:

> Viviani becomes emotional beyond the needs of the occasion. He swings his arms, he grows passionate, he goes back to the war and talks about France's part in it.

M. Viviani means to seize the occasion to make a plea for France's present situation. He describes her war-torn land and pleads for help and patience from us. The audience is sympathetic, but the colder part of it probably feels that Viviani has got rather far away from the Pacific islands. Still, Viviani is the real thing in the way of an orator. There is art and beauty in his diction and his manner. Merely to listen to him is a pleasure.

Everybody applauded Viviani heartily; and Viviani's oratorical temperament was obviously pleased. A newspaper man leaned over to someone who was applauding with especial emphasis and said, "Cut it out: if you don't look out, he'll jump up and make another speech."

Now Balfour arose. And Balfour made the sort of speech that Lodge had not. Balfour had been at the very heart of the negotiations. He knew the treaty. His thought was in it. Consequently he went directly and simply to the point. He knew that the main purpose and sole inspiration of the treaty was to terminate and take the place of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, and he said so. In a marked sense, Balfour had a difficult job. Getting rid of the Japanese Alliance was a delicate business for Great Britain. It had to be done in just the right way, or Japanese sensibilities would have been offended—justly so. At the same time, American sensibilities had been showing marked dis-

taste over the continuation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. That distaste on the part of America was the chief—practically the sole—reason for getting rid of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and making the four-power treaty to take its place. The whole thing had been a delicate bit of business;[1] and Balfour's speech on this occasion must be equally delicate. Balfour achieved that delicacy by the means often best adapted to attain delicacy, namely, by simple candour. He went straight to the heart of things and told the whole story. He said:

> I am perfectly well aware that the treaty between Great Britain and Japan has been the cause of much searching of heart, of some suspicions, of a good deal of animadversion in important sections of opinion in the United States. . . .
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> They call to mind the fact that it originally came into being on account of the aggressive attitude taken in Far Eastern affairs by Russia and by Germany, and they asked themselves, is there any further danger from Russia? And when they answered that question, as of course they were obliged to answer it, in the negative; when they perceived that the practical objects for which the Anglo-Japanese alliance was brought into being no longer ex-

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[1] A witty American newspaper man described this four-power treaty as a device to enable Great Britain to avoid prosecution for bigamy. She was united to Japan and did not want to divorce her without cause; at the same time she was extremely eager to be united to America.

isted, that history had wiped them out, they said to themselves, "Why, then, is this treaty continued? May it not in certain conceivable eventualities prove hampering and injurious in case strained relations should become yet more strained?"

I understand that point of view. But there is another point of view which I want you to understand and which even those who disagree with it will sympathize with. There is no audience that I would rather appeal to than an American audience on the point I am just going to mention. This treaty, remember, was not a treaty that had to be renewed. It was a treaty that ran until it was formally denounced by one of the two parties to it. It is true that the objects for which the treaty had been created no longer required international attention. But after all, that treaty or its predecessors has been in existence within a few days of twenty years. It has served a great purpose in two great wars. It has stood the strain of common sacrifices, common anxieties, common efforts, common triumphs. When two nations have been united in that fiery ordeal they cannot at the end of it take off their hats one to the other and politely part as two strangers part who travel together for a few hours in a railway train. Something more, something closer, unites them than the mere words of the treaty, and, as it were, gratuitously and without a cause, to tear up the written contract, although it serves no longer any valid or effective purpose, may lead to misunderstandings in one nation just as much as the maintenance of that treaty has led to misunderstandings in another.

In these words, Balfour made peace with Japan for leaving her.

III

I have spoken of the surprise which attended the emerging of this four-power treaty, and of the incredulity with which even the best informed American newspapers treated the rumours that such a treaty was in process of being brought to birth. When the background and antecedent history of the treaty was attended by such an atmosphere, it is not surprising that the formal announcement of it was attended with emotions that included some elements of doubt and suspicion. Probably there should not have been any doubt and suspicion after Mr. Balfour's candour in explaining the purpose of the treaty. But, nevertheless, doubt and suspicion there was.

Out of this state of mind, it arose that when the text of the treaty was spread abroad in the newspapers, it became the object of microscopic examination on the part of those—"comma hounds," we came to call them—whose perceptions of hidden meanings and remote possibilities of disconcerting interpretations are frequently embarrassing though often useful. One of these discovered in the treaty a thing that struck him as dreadful, and he raised a wild alarum. The treaty was designed to express a contract

whereby each of the four powers should respect each other's "insular possessions and insular dominions in the region of the Pacific Ocean." Those were the words; and the thing that the champion among the "comma-hounds" hit upon was the fact that these words would include the homelands of Japan. The primary purpose of the treaty was, of course, to cover the smaller islands and colonial dominions, the sort of territories that Lodge had referred to as the "lacy isles." But the homelands of Japan happen also to be islands. The wording of the treaty, therefore, gave to Japan precisely the same guarantees and commitments as to the smaller islands.

This discovery was meat for the critical—not only meat, but cheese and dessert and salad and tabasco sauce—particularly tabasco sauce. "If the homeland of Japan is a beneficiary of the treaty, why not the homeland of the United States?" they cried. They pictured America under an obligation to Japan without Japan being under an equivalent obligation to us. Someone else, with an exaggeration born of suspicion, said we were giving to Japan a guarantee we had refused to France—a suggestion that was rather more than far-fetched, because the protection that France had asked for and been refused three years ago was in the form of a guarantee of

military action, and was otherwise greatly different in form from the four-power treaty.[1]

The discovery was printed on the first pages of the newspapers and lengthily commented on for several days. Everybody talked about it. Newspaper men asked the American delegates about it, and they said yes, it was true. They attached no particular importance to it, and could see no menace in it, and no impropriety. Altogether, the thing was so completely admitted, and so universally discussed that it ceased to be a sensation.

Then, one afternoon, several days after the newspapers had ceased to talk about it, at one of the regular twice-a-week sessions of the newspaper men with President Harding, someone asked him if he regarded the language of the treaty as covering the homeland of Japan. He replied that, in his judgment, it did not.

The answer astonished the newspaper men. Nearly all of them had heard one or another of the American delegates who had participated in the making of the treaty say the contrary of what Harding now said. Instantly, Washington buzzed with talk about the differing interpretations put upon the treaty by Harding and by the delegates. It was pointed out that Hard-

[1] Nevertheless, it is fair to say that the treaty gave Japan some kind and degree of guarantee, at least; whereas, we had refused to give France any guarantee whatever.

ing must be unfamiliar with the newspaper discussion that had taken place some days before. Since that seemed an explanation difficult to accept, some of the gossip began to indulge in a wide variety of far-fetched surmise; it was said that maybe Harding wanted to rebuke his delegates publicly—maybe he was familiar with what they had done, but wanted to disavow it and precipitate a repudiation of it. There were several hours of acute excitement.

Later in the afternoon, two of the delegates, Lodge and Underwood, had a conference with the President, and about seven in the evening the White House issued a statement to be printed in the newspapers which read as follows:

When the President was responding to press inquiries at the afternoon interview today he expressed the opinion that the homeland of Japan did not come within the words "insular possession and insular dominions" under the four-power agreement except as territory proper of any other nation which is a party to the agreement.

This expression has been emphasized as a division between the President and the delegates to the Conference in construing the four-power agreement.

The President announced tonight that the difference in view in no wise will be permitted to embarrass the Conference or the ratification of the agreement. He had assumed all along that the spirit of the Conference contemplates a confidence which pledges respect of territory in every way which tends to promote lasting peace.

He has learned from the United States delegates to the Conference that they have agreed to the construction which includes the homeland of Japan in the term "insular possessions and insular dominions," and has no objection to that construction.

This public statement from Harding caused all the commotion to flare up again. If Harding's words were to be given credit for complete candour—and everybody knew Harding to be a man of simple candour—then it must be concluded that he was most naïvely uninformed about a matter that had been in everybody's mouth for a week. "Is Harding being kept in the dark?" asked some of the more critical papers. It was charged that not only Harding but the country was being denied essential information about what the Conference was doing. Most of this accusation and innuendo fell on the shoulders of Lodge. It was charged that Lodge, in the speech in which he had given the treaty to the public, had been lacking in candour when he failed to make the public understand clearly that the homelands of Japan were included. The speech in which Lodge talked of

> "sprinkled isles,
> Lily on lily, that o'er-lace the sea."

was recalled and made the subject of an ingenious variety of parody and satire. Some of the

Democrats were rather too deeply moved to be merely satirical. They recalled how the Republicans had acted when things had come out about the Paris Conference that gave Mr. Wilson's political enemies, including Lodge, the opportunity to make charges of secret diplomacy. The temper of this period of the Conference cannot be more readily pictured than by reproducing some portions of a despatch I wrote at the time:

> The Democrats are sullen about the situation. . . . They say if they "pass up" the opportunity to make political capital out of Harding's awkward situation they will merely be penalizing themselves, and they have little faith in the likelihood of getting any of the rewards of virtue practiced merely for its own sake.
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> The points the Democrats make don't go to the soul of the treaty. Many of them in their hearts feel that the treaty is mostly good and ought to be ratified. The thing they talk about with complete faith in their righteousness is the comparison between the forbearance which they are asked to practice now and, on the other hand, the ruthless malevolence with which the Republicans took the most unfair and vituperative advantage of every possible slip that Wilson made in connection with the League of Nations. If Wilson were to-day in Harding's shoes, if he were in the situation in which Harding and Lodge now are, and if the whole situation were today correspondingly reversed as it was two years ago, the Republicans would be making the heavens ring with words about secrecy, duplicity, and all the vocabulary that malevolence can

call to its service. The Democrats remember, and are justified in remembering, how Lodge and the other Republicans cross-examined Wilson like a man under suspicion of treason; how they abused him like a furtive thief of the nation's interests; how they took advantage of every occasion, just like the present, when something came out by accident that Wilson had failed to tell.

If the Democrats could see some clear way of making the most of their opportunity to bedevil Lodge and Harding, without at the same time imperiling the treaty, they would go to it with all the heartiness of embittered men presented by fate with a wonderful opportunity for a unique revenge. The Democrats in the Senate, with the exception of a very few like Reed, have a devoted affection for Wilson, and a righteous and wrathful sense of the cruelties practiced upon him. That affection is increased every day by the manner in which Wilson now comports himself, and by the appealing picture his situation makes. . . . It is Lodge more than Harding that the Democrats will go after. The Democrats recall that while Harding opposed the League, he never participated in the cruel baiting of Wilson. But Lodge the Democrats look upon as a horse of another color. They feel that Lodge hated Wilson. In the same degree, the Democrats now hate Lodge, and they will make the most of their chance to treat Lodge now as Lodge treated Wilson two years ago. Lodge has been reported during the last few days as saying that the present treaty—his treaty—must go through the Senate without reservations. You can imagine how the Democrats feel about a dictum like that, coming from one who, in the League of Nations debate, showed himself the champion reservator of the universe. There will be reservations proposed to the treaty or changes in it, and

Lodge, when he defends this treaty on the Senate floor, will have some experiences not hitherto equalled, even in a career as crowded with acrimony as his has been.

However, after a week or so of this sort of thing, most of the high feeling died down. The whole incident fitted perfectly the definition of a tempest in a teapot. It roared through the newspapers for about a week, and then evaporated. It had been awkward for Harding at the time; but essentially it didn't amount to anything. The explanation of the whole episode lay entirely in the excessively suspicious and partisan state of mind that had been built up in the minds of senators and in the minds of the public during the League of Nations debate. In this episode itself there was nothing to justify suspicion; and for the excitement into which the public was worked, there was no real cause. Ultimately, the public came to think of the inclusion of the Japanese homelands as of no importance from the standpoint of America. And it was just this lack of importance that was the cause of Harding's omitting to take account of it. Of course Harding had been kept informed of everything that was being done. Every person close to the Conference would observe that Hughes was seeing Harding every day. But the lack of importance attached to

the inclusion of the Japanese homelands by the American delegation, and the lack of importance that Harding attached to it—the same lack of importance that the public, when in a calmer mood, attached to it—that lack of importance accounted for the fact that it had not sunk into Harding's mind. Harding could not burden his mind with what seemed to be, and actually was, so relatively minor a matter, and at the same time carry on the business of the United States. The burden of work that Harding had on his shoulders at this time was a subject of comment. It happens that in a despatch I wrote just previous to this time, after reciting the important matters that were before Congress, and before the Cabinet, I said:

> All of these things President Harding seems to take in the course of the day's work. His unruffled serenity is one of the most striking things that appeal to those of us who make the daily round of events here. It is not the time, of course, to attempt a measured estimate of Harding's personality, which should take account of all its aspects, but there can be no doubt of the fact that his equanimity and his personal armor against the infection of excitement have much to do with the success of the Conference, and especially with the creation of the spirit and atmosphere of it. You get a sense of assurance and confidence from so little an episode as going to one of the conferences between the President and the newspaper men which are held after each Cabinet meeting, and find-

ing that in a two-hour session the Cabinet, under the serenity of Harding's leadership, has handled routine business, has not alluded to the Conference, and has carried on the affairs of the Government as if the Conference did not exist.

Harding's mind is singularly free from the handicaps that waste time and brain matter, either in worry about the past or apprehensions about the future. He does not fret and he has the valuable quality of dividing the business of the day into compartments. He waits until the matter in hand demands decision; he makes the decision, then passes on to the next thing. In the mere prosaic quality of capacity for hard work, Harding is extraordinary. In the relation he has to the Conference, the giving of thought to that alone is a strong man's work. Aside from that and in addition to it, the preparation of his opening address for the meeting of Congress next Tuesday would be a fair week's work for a man with average capacity for concentrated cerebration. Harding takes it all in an easy stride. These serene, unhurried, and unexcited qualities of Harding's personality are most certainly a highly important part of the Conference.

IV

Two explanations were current in the newspapers as to why the homelands of Japan had happened to be included. One was that Mr. Balfour had proposed it, and that his purpose was to convey a subtle compliment of dignity to Australia and New Zealand. Great Britain had, of course, wanted these two dominions to

be covered by the guarantees in the treaty, and Mr. Balfour apparently thought it would please them if, by implication, they were classified not as merely insular possessions of Great Britain, but as having the same status as the homelands of Japan. The other explanation was that the Americans preferred this interpretation because it would cause the treaty to cover Hawaii, which is not merely an insular possession of the United States, but has a closer relation.[1] Of the two explanations, the former appears to be the more authentic or, at least, to have had the most weight. It is certain the suggestion did not come from Japan.

The point was really of less importance than it seemed. The interpretation put upon it by the suspicious was that Japan had "slipped something over;" that she had secured from the Conference a guarantee of protection which the United States did not get. If the excitement and suspicion could be credited with any justification at all, it would have to rest on the theory that Japan had secured a secret advantage. And there was nothing in that. The Japanese did not really care about the inclusion of their homelands. Some of them had felt dubious about

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[1] To illustrate the difference, the representative of Hawaii in our Congress is a "territorial delegate," while the representative of the Philippines is a "resident commissioner."

it at the time it was done. Subsequently, at the close of the Conference, the whole thing was disposed of by a supplementary treaty specifically removing the homelands of Japan from the original treaty. It was Japan who took the initiative in bringing this about. Japan's state of mind was precisely the opposite of what the suspicious attributed to her. The incident was a curious example of the place that *amour propre* has in diplomacy. Balfour wanted the homelands of Japan included because that would seem to give to Australia and New Zealand a status equal to that of Japan, while to omit them would seem to classify them as "insular dominions" in a sense of dependency. Balfour wanted to pay a subtle compliment to those two dominions. Japan, on the other hand, did not care to have her homelands included for precisely the opposite reason, because that would fail to recognize the distinction between her as a great Empire, and Australia and New Zealand. The clearest fact about the whole episode is that all the suspicion against Japan which was fanned into flame by those who had taken the lead in that sort of thing, had not one spark of justification, and was founded on attributing to her a supposed wish which was exactly the opposite of her real wish. This incident should be borne in mind as a brake against the next oc-

casion when America is called upon to get excited about some international bugaboo.

V

What I have so far said about the four-power treaty has aimed to try to reproduce for the reader distant in time and space, the sequence of impressions made upon the mind of one who was an observer in Washington at the time.

But for the sake of even the most limited historical adequacy, it is necessary to say something briefly about the four-power treaty from a point of view that includes some events antecedent to it.

Great Britain and Japan had an alliance. It was formed in 1901. Its purpose was mutual support against the aggressions then being made in China and the Far East by Russia and Germany. At the time, nobody in America paid any considerable attention to it. Certainly no one lodged any formal or official objection to it. It did not then strike us as calling for objection from us. Its purpose was well understood. The increasing aggressions of Russia and Germany were obvious. The motives for Great Britain and Japan to unite for mutual help were equally obvious. These motives seemed entirely reasonable. America had no thought of the al-

liance as objectionable to us, or even as being of concern to us.

But by the summer of 1922, many things had happened, and America was of a different mind. In the first place, Russia and Germany had ceased to have any potency for aggression in China or anywhere else. Therefore the original reason for the alliance had ceased to exist. Moreover, America had been brought much closer to the rest of the world. We had begun to think about international matters with a closeness we had not dreamed of twenty years earlier. We had begun to see that what happens in remote parts of the world may ultimately affect our interests and even our safety. The long and acrimonious popular discussion of the League of Nations, leading to a national political campaign on that issue, had made us self-conscious about matters within the field of foreign relations which, before, we had ignored.

In this state of mind, there came to be expressions of American sentiment, in debates in the Senate and elsewhere, bringing the Anglo-Japanese Alliance into question. We had come to think of Japan as having aggressive intentions, and following aggressive practices, in China and the Far East, which we regarded as inimical to our interests, and contrary to our declared policy. We had begun to think of

Japan, it is not too much to say, as a potential enemy; and came to think of her alliance with Great Britain as a menace—certainly a menace to our interests and policies in the Far East, and perhaps a menace to the security of our possessions. We came to feel that in our efforts to check some of Japan's aggression in China, we were baffled by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Under cover of it, Japan was doing things which she might have hesitated to do if Great Britain were free to unite with America in opposition. The alliance kept British sentiment silent.

This was the popular view in America. It must be assumed that the view of the American Government, officially, was also unfavourable to Great Britain going on with her alliance with Japan. That has been made evident by the communications made public in the Senate during the debate on the four-power treaty. It is also evident now that during the months preceding the Washington Conference our government had given the British Government opportunities to understand the feeling of America about the Japanese alliance. Apart from any official communication, there was no effort at concealing, and it was not possible to conceal, that the British Government was well aware of the popular feeling in America; and that some influences

within the British Government were anxious to placate that feeling. At a meeting of the Dominion premiers in London in the summer of 1922, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was one of the subjects of discussion. Some of the premiers regarded the alliance as objectionable. Some of them regarded it as objectionable for reasons of their own; and some, at least, regarded it as objectionable merely because the United States regarded it as objectionable. Some of the Dominion premiers felt that no alliance with Japan could be as valuable or desirable to the British Empire, as completeness of good feeling between the Empire and the United States. At one time, when the matter of continuing the alliance with Japan was under discussion, the representative of Canada said it should only be continued provided that continuance were completely satisfactory to the United States. I have been told that Lloyd George remarked to the Canadian, "You talk more like a citizen of the United States than like a citizen of the British Empire."

On another occasion, while this same matter of continuing the alliance with Japan was under discussion in London, a despatch from London stated in effect that the government of the United States was being kept informed of the progress of the discussion, and that all that was

being done was satisfactory to the United States. The mere publication of such a despatch is evidence of how much the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, and the reaction of America to that alliance, was on the minds of the British.

This despatch was not correct, and our State Department issued a public denial of the statement that we were officially informed of, or agreeable to, what was being done by Great Britain as respects the continuance of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Nothing more than the reciting of this episode alone need be said to show that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance figured definitely in the diplomatic relations of Great Britain with the United States last summer.

This was the state of affairs when the negotiations for the holding of the Washington Conference came to be under way. In those negotiations, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance never figured directly. But it was always in the background, and in the minds of the British and American officials. While the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was not on the agenda of the Washington Conference, it was apparent that that Conference could not readily end without taking account of it. For one thing, no agreement for the limitation of navies could be satisfactory if any two of the nations within the agreement were bound together by an inner alliance.

The result was that when Mr. Balfour came to America he undoubtedly came with the intention of utilizing his contact with Mr. Hughes to coöperate in any way that could be found to end the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. It can also be taken for granted that Mr. Hughes held the termination of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance to be one of the most important objectives of American diplomacy. Mr. Hughes, obviously, could not take the initiative, beyond letting Great Britain understand that we regarded the Alliance as unfortunate. It was for Great Britain to take the initiative, at least to the extent of showing willingness to terminate the treaty, provided she felt completeness of good-will from America to be worth abrogation of her alliance with Japan. The public evidence indicates that as soon as Great Britain showed willingness to coöperate toward finding a way toward ending the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, it was Mr. Hughes who promptly took the initiative in making a concrete suggestion and drafting the treaty. Mr. Hughes, in a letter to Senator Underwood, during the Senate debate, said:

> I understand that in the course of debate in the Senate upon the four-power treaty, questions have been raised with respect to its authorship. It seems to be implied that in some way the American delegates have been imposed

upon or that they were induced to accept some plan cunningly contrived by others and opposed to our interests.

Apart from the reflection upon the competency of the American delegates, such intimations betray a very poor and erroneous conception of the work in connection with the Conference, no part of which—whether within or outside the Conference meetings—was begun, prosecuted or concluded in intrigue. Nothing could be further from the fact. The views of this Government as to the importance of the termination of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance had been communicated long before the Conference met, and it had also been clearly stated that this Government could enter into no alliance or make any commitment to the use of arms or which would impose any sort of obligation as to its decisions in future contingencies.

It must deal with any exigency according to its constitutional methods. In preparation for the Conference, the American delegates reviewed the matter thoroughly and the entire course of the negotiations in connection with the four-power treaty were in accord with these principles, and, as I have said, within the limits which we defined.

The treaty itself is very short and simple, and is perfectly clear. It requires no commentary. Its engagements are easily understood and no ingenuity in argument or hostile criticism can add to them or make them other or greater than its unequivocal language sets forth. There are no secret notes or understandings.

In view of this, the question of authorship is unimportant. It was signed by four powers, whose delegates respectively adopted it, all having made various suggestions.

I may say, however, with respect to the general course of negotiations that after assent had been given by Great

Britain and Japan that France should be a party to the agreement, I prepared a draft of the treaty based upon the various suggestions which had been exchanged between the delegates.

This draft was first submitted to Senator Lodge and Mr. Root, as you were then absent on account of the death of your mother. After the approval of the American delegates who were here, the draft was submitted to the representatives of other powers and became the subject of discussion between the heads of the delegations concerned, and with few changes, which were approved by the American delegates and which did not affect the spirit or substance of the proposed treaty, an agreement was reached.

It is easy to infer from this statement that Mr. Hughes made some things clear to the others. We could not join the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, because, as Mr. Hughes expresses it, "This government could enter into no alliance, or make any commitment to the use of arms." In short, our government was bound by the action of our people on the League of Nations. We would enter into a treaty, for the sake of terminating the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, but the terms of that treaty must not go beyond the limits, repeatedly affirmed, of our willingness to participate in international arrangements of any sort.

The four-power treaty is a device for terminating the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. It

must be judged by that, and by little else, for there is little else to it. It was a device for ending that alliance without hurting the feelings of Japan. It must be remembered that the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was not a contract which automatically came to an end on a fixed date. If it had been that kind of a document, Great Britain might readily have let it expire by simple limination of time. But it could only be terminated by an affirmative action. And Great Britain could not in decency take that action. Great Britain had had the benefits of that alliance in a time of serious need. It had ensured to her the help of Japan during the great war. But for that Alliance, Japan would have been free to remain a neutral, or even to join Germany. Having thus been served in so vital a way, Great Britain could not say to Japan, "We are through with you now; here's your hat." As Mr. Balfour expressed it, two nations, having been associated in this way, could not, at the end of the association, take off their hats to each other and part like casual strangers after a trip in a railroad train.

The four-power treaty, as I say, was a device for terminating the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, so as to satisfy America without offending Japan. By that service it is to be judged.

CHAPTER X

JAPAN AND CHINA

TOWARD the close of the Conference, during the period when those parts of it which dealt with the Far East were being concluded, one of the British correspondents gave currency to a phrase which, as striking phrases often do, tended to colour the judgment of the world about what the Conference had done in regard to the Far East. He took an old couplet and by a facetious substitution made it appear that the Conference had said to China,

> "Be good, sweet China,
> And let Japan be clever."

The correspondent who, in what may have been a moment of cynical humour, thus summed up what had been done about the Far East, was Mr. Henry W. Nevinson of the Manchester *Guardian*. Mr. Nevinson was one of the best men who attended the Conference, and in a broader way is among the most distinguished half dozen or so of the journalistic exponents of

liberal thought in England, a thoroughly high-minded man who is always on the side of good causes. Coming from Mr. Nevinson, this casual phrase may have expressed the momentary disappointment of a man who had set his hopes on perfection. Or it may have been a mere indulgence in cleverness, the sort of thing a brilliant man often does at a moment when he does not purport to be attempting a careful or responsible statement of a well thought out judgment. I am confident Mr. Nevinson would have been dismayed if he had thought this ingenious parody would be taken, as I observed it was taken by many editorial writers, as an adequate summary of what the Conference had done about Japan and China.

If we are to deal in any such catch-line judgments as this at all, if we are to give weight to the detached impressions of a moment, I should much more strongly recommend one that came from a less sophisticated source. In one of those closing plenary sessions, the one in which the treaties and resolutions about the Far East were being read by Mr. Hughes and formally adopted by the Conference, I happened to have with me as a guest a man from the country, who had no particular information about what the Conference had done, or about the Far East generally; one whose knowledge was merely that

of the casual reader of the papers in a city remote from Washington. This guest of mine, having watched the proceedings, having heard Hughes read all the formidable documents into the record, and having observed the expression and manner of the Japanese and the other delegates, gave unsophisticated but shrewd judgment on the impression he had received by saying, almost with the air of sympathizing with the underdog in a situation as to which he was uninformed about the fundamental merits: "Didn't it seem to you Hughes was pretty harsh with those Japs?"

That naïve and simple expression was a much more dependable judgment—if we are to deal in such brief and casual judgments at all—than Mr. Nevinson's parody. The effect of what Hughes read that last day as the final results of what the Conference had done about Japan and China was rough on the Japanese; and the Japanese delegates had the appearance of men who felt it so. Baron Shidehara was pale. He had been made ill by the burden of the Conference, and looked as different as possible from a man who had been clever, who had succeeded in "putting something over." Baron Kato had the same appearance of wanness and repression. Baron Kato was at best so frail and small a man that I always used to think of him in terms of

the illustrations in an old book of Mr. H. G. Wells about Mars. These illustrations pictured the men of Mars as persons who had developed their brains to the point where they were greatly out of proportion to their bodies. They looked like concentrated intelligence, and little more. They had heads and eyes which represented a development and refinement of intellect beyond human, with bodies that tapered off into some resemblance to the tail of a tadpole. Let no one read any hint of grotesqueness, or any degree of unimpressiveness whatever into this comparison, which merely suggests one aspect of how Baron Kato appeared to me. In appearance, as well as intellectually, Baron Kato was one of the most impressive men in Washington. His eyes peered out from his well-proportioned head like the glowing focus of an immense and acute intelligence.

That was the appearance of Baron Kato at all times, and on this closing day he looked like a man who must sit still and listen to something far from agreeable. He was listening to a judgment on certain actions of his country; and he knew those actions were disapproved by the world. Baron Kato personally may have felt one way or the other about those actions; but however he may have felt, he was bound to defend them, and had defended them, and had

fought steadily for his country's position. This was the day of judgment. He had not succeeded in making the world see some of his country's actions as other than deplorable—he must have known he could not; and now he must sit silent and hear those actions condemned in formal documents read out to be spread on the records of the Conference, condemned in words which, however they were cushioned in diplomatic elegancies, contained implications which made them about as severe as anything you often hear in a conference of this sort.

The point about which Mr. Hughes was most severe on Japan was Siberia. In the course of the war, after Russia collapsed, America and Japan united in a joint military expedition into Siberia. At the time, our government took the precaution to make a public and formal statement, and insisted that Japan should also make a similarly clear statement, to the effect that the purposes of the expedition were solely to help in temporary matters arising out of the war, and that so soon as these purposes ceased to exist, the soldiers would be withdrawn. The statement which the Japanese made at the time, in compliance with the American initiative, was as clear as anything could be. Japan avowed most solemnly her intention to "respect the territorial integrity of Russia," and, so soon as the purely

temporary exigency should be over, "to immediately withdraw all Japanese troops from Russian territory," and "to leave wholly unimpaired the sovereignty of Russia in all its phases, whether political or military." That was the promise the Japanese Government made to us, to Russia, and to the world at the time that she and we joined in sending troops into Siberia.

Thereafter, as soon as America judged the time had come to withdraw, America withdrew. Japan did not. We thought she ought to, and we said so. A spirited diplomatic correspondence arose between the two countries. Mr. Hughes summed it up in the mildest of terms when he said, "It must frankly be avowed that this correspondence has not always disclosed an identity of views between the two governments." One of the notes we wrote to Japan recited that "the issue presented is one of scrupulous fulfilment of the assurances given to the Russian people." In response to an excuse made by Japan that she had to continue keeping her troops in Russian territory in order to suppress and prevent local disorder, we said that what Japan was doing in Russia "tends rather to increase than to allay the unrest and disorder."

These, of course, are but mere fragments of the correspondence we had with Japan about

her promise to get out of Russian territory. But Japan didn't get out, and hasn't got out yet.[1]

When the Conference came, all this was brought up, among other Far Eastern matters; and Japan was again asked to withdraw her troops. Baron Shidehara read a long statement explaining why Japan didn't want to get out yet. Mr. Hughes replied, deploring Japan's refusal. In the end, since no agreement could be arrived at, Hughes fell back upon the device of "reading into the record" the correspondence and debates that had taken place. Hughes read it all himself, in the presence of the public, at that final session. He read it in his strong, forthright voice, the vigour of which occasionally takes on almost the tone of harshness.[2] It was a pretty unpleasant thing for

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1 In stating this issue between the United States and Japan, I am stating it frankly from the point of view that Hughes took in the documents he read to the Conference and in the correspondence preceding, which were also read into the record of the Conference. Secretary Hughes conducted the correspondence and was familiar with the facts. He arrived at the judgment that the excuses given by Japan for not getting out of Siberia were inadequate, and, within the limits of diplomatic courtesy, said so. In this chapter, I have, as I have said, frankly taken the point of view and judgment which Mr. Hughes expressed in the correspondence. Obviously, any person who wishes to come to an independent judgment of his own should examine the correspondence and arguments, and should familiarize himself with the excuses given by Japan, which excuses I have not space here to reproduce.

2 A newspaper man in a whimsical mood, listening to Hughes reading all this correspondence and debate into the record, remarked, "If any judge ever has a chance to read an indictment of me, I hope he may have a more sympathetic voice."

the Japanese to listen to—the repetition, first, of their solemn promises; then, of the American demand that this promise be fulfilled; next, of the Japanese excuses; and, finally, of the American reproaches.

At this public session, Hughes did much the same with the controversy between Japan and China about the "Twenty-one Demands." Adopting the same device of "reading into the record" passages from the debates, and other correspondence, Hughes repeated before the public all the excuses made by Japan, and all the answers made by China—an exchange in which Japan was palpably in the wrong.

In 1915, when nearly all Europe was at war, and when the eyes of most of the world were engaged in Europe, as well as the navies and military forces, Japan took the opportunity presented by China's temporary isolation from her Western friends, to make on her a series of demands which would have reduced China to substantially the position of a Japanese vassal. When China, in her helplessness, attempted delay, Japan delivered a brusque ultimatum, backed up with the clearly implied threat of military action, and forced the signature by the bedeviled Chinese Government.

At the Conference, China brought all this up and called for the withdrawal of the twenty-one

demands. Japan replied by withdrawing some and modifying others, but declined to make complete withdrawal. Japan's position in the matter had been odious. Many of Japan's own people knew it was odious and felt the nation's humiliation. At the time the demands first became known in Japan, the late Mr. Hara, at one time Premier of Japan, declared that what his country had done in China "has the effect of lowering the prestige of the Japanese Empire" and "will form the source of future trouble."

In the Washington Conference, when China called for the complete withdrawal of the twenty-one demands, Japan's reply was pretty feeble, and, from any standpoint of intellectual integrity, not impressive. The response of China, on the other hand, was as fine and forceful an example of the literature of dignified excoriation as you could hear in many a day—as might well be the case, considering that the rights and wrongs of the question were as clearly distributed as black and white.

All this, also, Hughes, in that loud and penetrating voice which has no capacity for any flexibilities of gentle glossing over, even if he had wanted to gloss it over—all this, Hughes read into the record.

At the same time, Hughes gave decidedly the impression of being fair with the Japanese, and

of accepting with full faith the promises and disclaimers they now made. While Japan failed to promise to get her troops out of Russian territory on any fixed date, she did give an absolute promise to withdraw whenever the conditions should make it seem to her possible to do so without danger. Also she coupled this with a frank and complete disclaimer to any rights or privileges whatever. These promises and disclaimers Mr. Hughes read into the record as completely as he had read the expressions of dissatisfaction contained in the correspondence preceding the Conference. He did it with the manner of putting complete reliance on the sincerity of the Japanese, and of complete confidence that they would carry out the promises made as a part of their present attitude.

Also, in reading into the record the present partial withdrawals and modifications made in the Conference by the Japanese, with respect to the twenty-one demands, Mr. Hughes made it clear that the present changes took away the great bulk of what had been odious in the demands in their original form. Mr. Hughes said that those parts of the twenty-one demands which related to Shantung "have been settled to the mutual satisfaction of both parties." Mr. Hughes also said, "It is gratifying to be advised by the statement made by Baron Shidehara on

behalf of the Japanese Government that she is now ready to withdraw" [other portions of the twenty-one demands]; and said "this definite withdrawal . . . removes what has been an occasion for considerable apprehension. . . ." This part of what Mr. Hughes read into the record made it clear that practically all of what had been essentially odious in the original form of the twenty-one demands had now been withdrawn by Japan.

Nevertheless, the net impression made by the whole of all this reading into the record by Mr. Hughes was that of an indictment; for he, as Chairman of the Conference, was reading not only his own words as contained in his preceding correspondence, but also many of the things said by the Chinese during the course of the Conference, which, also, had been ordered to be spread upon the minutes. Some of these things said by the Chinese delegates about Japan had been pretty severe. The net effect of it, therefore, to one who was merely a casual listener, was, as I have said, one of adverse judgment. Necessarily, the reading into the record not only included the reassurance created by Japan's undertakings now made in the Conference; but included also the record of Japan's blameful past in this respect. In consequence, all in all, that closing day was a rather unhappy time for the Japanese.

It was little wonder they drooped and had the manner of men listening to a gravely adverse judgment passed upon them—little wonder that an unsophisticated listener with not much knowledge of the background, should have felt almost sympathetic to what seemed to be the under dog at the moment, and should have remarked that "Hughes seemed pretty harsh on those Japs."

II

No, "clever" is not the word that describes the rôle of the Japanese at the Washington Conference. At least, not "clever" in the sinister sense. As M. Sarraut said on his return to Paris from the Conference—and this is good testimony, coming from a disinterested witness speaking spontaneously and only indirectly on the point—M. Sarraut said that France had found herself in the position that everybody thought, in advance of the Conference, Japan alone was going to occupy, the rôle of defendant. Japan herself came to the Conference conscious of being a defendant. She came to the Conference knowing that she was under suspicion and disapproval in America. Knowing that, Japan's conduct at the Conference could only be

described as "clever" in the sense that cleverness is identical with the intelligence that recognizes an adverse opinion about her actions, and makes a sincere effort to overcome it. "Clever" in any sense that implies successful smartness, Japan was not. "Clever" in the sense that she recognized that she was "in bad" and that this condition was, even in her own eyes, largely the fault of her own past acts—"clever" in that sense, Japan may have been. She advocated and practised openness in her diplomacy to an extent that some of the nations did not who regard themselves as more virtuous. She settled the Yap controversy with Hughes in a manner satisfactory in detail to both countries. She turned back Shantung to China, and receded from most of her positions on China which had put her in an undesirable light. She made the impression of not unreasonably impeding the process of restoring China to territorial and governmental integrity beyond what the others were willing to do, except in a few particulars; and she was reasonably helpful in arriving at the all-important naval agreement—helpful in this respect more markedly than at least one other nation which had greater reason to be helpful, and in spite of the fact that the sacrifices of naval strength that Japan made must cause her political difficulties of a sort that were seriously

embarrassing; but which she did not, nevertheless, plead in extenuation.

It seemed to me—and I say this only tentatively, for I am not well grounded on Far Eastern matters—that Japan is in a process of transition such as made the position of her delegates to this Conference difficult and embarrassing. Japan seems to be midway in the process of change from a markedly autocratic form of government to one more liberal and democratic.[1] At any moment it is hard to know which force is ascendant; and those who manage Japan's contacts with the rest of the world must labour under the unescapable handicap of more or less unwillingly and blamelessly carrying water on both shoulders. The Japan that made the twenty-one demands, that seized Korea, and otherwise behaved pretty blamefully in the Far East, was the Japan whose form of government was modelled to a degree on that of Prussia, and which had the piratical point of view of the German junkers toward her neighbours and the rest of the world. That element, and the feudal aristocrats who compose it, seem to have still a sufficient grip on the government of Japan to make it impossible as yet for the more liberal democratic forces to repudiate or undo all the

[1] Since the Conference, there have been serious riots at Tokio arising out of a demand for an extension of the suffrage which would make the government more democratic.

things the old crowd did, or to start Japan off on a definitely new and different course.[1]

Another fact that I kept remembering about Japan is that every one of the odious things she did, every one of the acts for which the Western world now reproaches her sanctimoniously, was done in imitation of that same Western world. The Western world was the only model she had, and the source of our complaint now is that she learned the lesson rather too well, and followed our example rather too literally. A less time ago than the life of men now living, Japan was in solitude and isolation, a recluse, by her own choice. (There was a time when the Japanese law forbade any man to build a ship large enough to reach a foreign shore, so determined was Japan to resist infection by what she regarded, with perhaps justified apprehension, as corruption from the Western world.) She had her own philosophy, her own ethics, and her own code of conduct. We forced her out of that, forced her out brutally and arrogantly. We—by "we" I mean the whole Western world—made her understand that we were going to oppress her and exploit her. We bullied her in the usual

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1 As I have pointed out, I say all this about domestic Japanese politics tentatively. It is a subject with which I am not intimately familiar. What I have said is based on things I was told here at the Washington Conference and things I surmised from some of the actions of the Japanese delegation.

way of the West with the East. We started in to do to Japan the same things we did to China.

Japan considered her situation and concluded her best defense was to adopt Western ways. She started in on a process of highly intelligent and thoroughgoing imitation. She imitated Western armies, Western navies, the Western form of government, Western diplomacy, Western morals, and the frequent Western attitude toward weaker nations. And it is the fruits of that too successful imitation that we now complain about. Maybe, among the varying models Japan might have found within the Western idea as a whole, the ones she chose were not always the most enlightened. She took more of her new institutions from Germany than was best for her or us. "We imitated Western diplomacy," said a Japanese gentleman, "but unhappily it was the worst parts of it that we imitated first."

Everything that Japan has done in China was an imitation of something that Great Britain or Germany or Russia had already done first. It was Great Britain and the other Western nations that did the first and the worst grabbing and exploiting in China. One fact I always felt like keeping steadily in mind throughout the Washington Conference is that Japan has little or no Chinese territory that she took direct from

China. What Japan took, she took not from China but from some other nation that had already seized it from China. It was Germany that took Shantung from China, and kept it with the serene approval of the Western world. Then Japan took it from Germany through honest warfare; and thereupon we all cried to Heaven that Japan must undo this wicked thing, must restore Shantung to China. Again, it was not Japan that took Port Arthur from China. It was Russia, and once more, it was through approved warfare that Japan in turn took it from Russia. Thereupon, again, the Western world, which had not been shocked when one of themselves ravished China, cried to Heaven with indignation when Japan went to war with the despoiler and got possession of the spoils through a fair fight between equals.

Altogether, while some of the things Japan has done in China have been pretty bad, while the twenty-one demands and the manner in which they were made has set Japan back fifty years in the good opinion of enlightened persons, you always feel that, with the exception of America, which almost alone, and certainly most conspicuously of all, has an honorable record in China—with the exception of America, the Western world has no license to be sanctimoniously shocked about Japan.

It seems to me that one of the most obvious aspects of present Japanese policy is the effort, in her public actions, to secure the approval of the West. Having imitated the worst parts of Western diplomacy first, and having found that it led her to sorrow and disappointment, she may now, because of the same intelligence, imitate whatever is the most honourable diplomacy with which the Western world may be willing to provide her as an example. If the Western world means what it has said in the Washington Conference, if we really provide the practice in accord with the precept, all the lessons of our experience with Japan justify the expectation that as she imitated the worse examples of the Western world in the past, she will imitate whatever better example we may provide for her in the future.

III

The Chinese delegates—at least the two who spoke English best and were most in evidence —were, for their rôle, a curious twain. One was a graduate of Columbia and the other of Cornell. Both had been editors of their college papers in America. They were wholly Western in clothes and manner. How far they were Western in thought, and how far they may have retained the

essential philosophy of the country of their birth, one could not tell, of course, without knowing them intimately. One kept wondering to what extent they were Occidentalized, and to what extent they retained the ancient point of view of their own people about the conduct of life, man's relation to eternity and the like. The wife of Dr. Koo—he was called "Doctor" by virtue of an academic degree at an American university—wore the most modern of Parisian clothes. Madame Sze wore the much more lovely native women's dress of China, and by that gave rather the more pleasure and received the more approval. The two men were extraordinarily well educated and both had had much experience in diplomacy for their years. Dr. Koo was less than thirty-five, and Dr. Sze in his early forties. Dr. Koo gave the impression of having been rather the more thoroughly Westernized, the more completely smartened up according to modern American standards. Dr. Sze, while his clothes were Western, and his English much more perfect than that of most of ourselves, had something about him that suggested a background, a residuum of the philosophy and point of view of his race, a calm that rests upon the wisdom of centuries. For this quality, Dr. Sze seemed a little the more appealing. You felt you would enjoy spending an afternoon with

him speculating as to whether the Chinese philosophy of calm, or the Western philosophy of "do it now" is ultimately to prevail over a world that is rapidly being brought so close together, so compactly into one unit, that it can hardly escape having a single world-wide philosophy. One could never see these highly modernized, highly Westernized young men, without recalling Li Hung Chang, that six-foot Chinaman with a queue and a button and a cap and a mandarin coat, who, within the present generation, came to America as the representative of the old Chinese dynastic Government. You occasionally wondered whether these two young moderns might not have a long row to hoe, in bringing their people to democracy, Y. M. C. A.'s, steam heat and automobiles. You felt the immensity of the distance from Li Hung Chang with his queue and his gorgeous mandarin coat, to Dr. Wellington Koo in his dress suit and Madame Koo in her Paris clothes; you felt it was a very long leap; and you occasionally wondered whether these young moderns were going to be able to lead their people across it in a single generation.

This fact that China is in a state of transition, midway between autocracy and democracy, this condition within China itself, was, to the Conference, quite as large a difficulty in the way of

doing something for China, as was the recalcitrancy of any one of the other nations, or of all of them. You couldn't always be sure that the China you were dealing with was the China that might be in the saddle next week.

However, the Chinese delegates opened the sessions of the Conference that dealt with the Far East by the formal presentation to the Conference of a document which came to be known as the "ten demands." These ten demands were the maximum that China asked for or hoped for. The complete granting of them would have meant the restoration of China to a place among the nations of the world, as secure and independent as that of any other country. (At least, the ten demands would have accomplished this so far as it can be accomplished by any action on the part of forces outside of China. China's position in the family of nations cannot be made secure by the actions of other nations alone; there are many things that China must do for herself, and these things China is not yet in a position to undertake. She is in the midst of transition from an autocratic form of government to a democratic form. That transition is accompanied by much domestic confusion, and this internal state of China, which can only be cured by China herself, was, it is not too much to say, certainly as great an obstacle in the Con-

ference as the attitude of any one nation or of all the nations outside of China.[1])

Those who have felt disappointment about the accomplishments of the Conference with respect to China do so because they compare those accomplishments with the original ten demands submitted by the Chinese delegates, or with some

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1 This was expressed with convincing force by an able American who knows the East well through long experience as the representative there of American newspapers, and who is now one of the foreign counsellors of the Japanese Government. Mr. Moore said:

> "If any one thinks that this Conference here in Washington can, by the drafting of declarations or treaties remake that massive old State, he is very much mistaken. It can't be done. The Chinese, if they are to adopt our methods and our manners, must do so of their own accord and in their own good time. This Conference can help a little and will do so, but China alone can remodel herself, and when she remakes herself upon modern lines there will be no power on earth that can possibly hold her in subjection.
>
> "If any expected the group of forty gentlemen who are now sitting in conference to perform the miracle of spiritually remaking the 400,000,000 Chinese, or the 60,000,000 Japanese, or the 40,000,000 or more Englishmen, you were doomed to disappointment from the beginning. The remaking of peoples is not the work of a day nor of a group of mortal men in conference. But a group of intelligent men in a conference such as is taking place here, supported by the dominating bulk of civilized public opinion the world over, can accomplish much and is doing so."

One feels like expressing some wonder, in comment on this, whether Japan has been wholly wise in the past, or China will be wholly wise in the future, to "adopt our methods and our manners" in so wholesale a way, to swallow Western culture in such large gulps. As to some of the aspects of Western culture that the Orient has been absorbing, persons of taste frequently reflect whether the Orient might not have done better to hold fast to her own. There are aspects of Oriental manners, art, industry, and philosophy which may in the distant future appeal more strongly to the coming world than the corresponding Western practices, To any one with a reflective turn of mind, the Washington Conference, among its many colourful and striking qualities, was constantly stimulating speculation about what may be the final results of the constantly increasing contacts between Eastern and Western cultures—how much the East may take on from us, and how much we may take on from the East.

other counsel of perfection, and find that there is a hiatus between the ideal and the fulfilment. It is to be remembered always that these demands were a picture of perfection.

The Conference did not go so far as was asked by the ten demands; but it went as far as the circumstances of China herself would permit. Even the Chinese delegates did not expect the ideal to be accomplished at this one jump. When the Conference granted only a part of the ten demands, the Chinese delegates were candid enough to say they had not seriously hoped for all. At one point, in the debates, Dr. Wang said he had not the purpose of asking for "an immediate and complete solution of extraterritoriality," but rather "the purpose of inviting the powers to coöperate with China in taking initial steps toward improving and eventually abolishing the existing system. . . . It is gratifying to learn of the sympathetic attitude of the powers toward this question."

At another point, Dr. Wellington Koo made a similar statement of satisfaction with the progress made, and of the fact that the Chinese themselves did not expect perfection at one jump. Dr. Koo said: "China knew that the cumulative results of eighty years could not be wiped off at this Conference. . . . The Chinese delegation had in fact prepared a list

of specific questions which it thought should be discussed at the Conference, not necessarily for the purpose of finding an immediate solution for every one of them, but with the idea of surveying the ground and knowing where China and the other powers represented at the Conference stood."

IV

In considering the demands made by China, the first step was a move made by Mr. Root. Mr. Root in Washington was an impressive figure, and the sort of thing he now did was characteristic of the rôle he played throughout. Elihu Root, as he appeared at the Washington Conference, was a spectacle to command attention like some splendid monument. There he stood, at the age of seventy-six, with a brain that was richly endowed in the beginning, and has now the acute refinement and fine efficiency that comes of a lifetime of hard intellectual work. It was easy to envisage him, at his age and with his philosophic temperament, surveying the world from the standpoint of one who must have begun to consider the time when he shall have left it. Looking at the world with this serene abstraction, and determined to bequeath to it the heritage of the best work of a career already crowded with achievement, he considered the tides of

evolution and the stars of direction and put his mind upon what was best to be done about that four hundred million human beings who compose the largest single nation on the earth's surface—what is best to be done not only about the four hundred millions for their own sake, but about their big and close relation to a world which wabbles dangerously on the no man's land between chaos and order.

It would have been appallingly easy to get off with the wrong foot about China, and it would have had terrifying consequences if that had happened. The theory upon which the subject of China was taken up was probably an axiom of intellectual habit with a man of Mr. Root's discipline of mind. A less competent brain might readily have chosen the more obvious way, and the more obvious way would have been the fatally wrong way. The obvious thing would have been to take up the disputed aspects of China one by one—to begin by quarrelling about post offices and then to pass to tariffs in a state of mind made acrimonious by dispute. That course would have led to the maximum of controversy.

But the theory upon which Mr. Root led off was based on considering, first, not the points of controversy about China but the points of agreement. The theory was first to enumerate and set down those aspects of China as to which there

was no dissent, and leave for later discussion those things which were described in the invitation to the Conference as "the remaining causes of friction in the world." Among other advantages this method of approach had that of creating in the Conference a spirit of harmony and agreement with which to take up afterward those aspects of the question which required the smoothing out of differences. In this spirit Mr. Root formulated the statement of principles to which all subscribed.

Mr. Root engaged in this process was a spectacle to enrich the imagination. At an age and with a relation to the world that frees him from any necessity for considerations of party or factional or personal interest, he takes the visible universe for his client and lays down a course of action whose results will have a fairly large determining influence on what the world is to be a century after Mr. Root has departed from it. Here is a world in which civilization has become a relatively small island surrounded by the chaos of Russia's two hundred millions, with Central Europe's hundred millions and India's three hundred millions tottering towards a degree of collapse that the men in the Conference knew better than any one else. Under this set of conditions, could it be possible that the nations that compose this receding and imperilled island of

civilization would choose to add four hundred millions more to the sea of chaos? Even on the basis of cold self-interest, the short-sighted selfishness that would divide China up must yield to the more enlightened self-interest that will restore it and maintain it for civilization. The men of reason who composed the Conference could not but see that the thing to do about China is not to steal it but to heal it.

(What I have said about Mr. Root as an impressive figure at the Conference was also true of many of the others. The Washington Conference was a gathering of very able men. One day during the Conference Mr. H. G. Wells, in the course of a casual conversation about his "Outline of History," spoke of something that Plutarch had said about the Roman Cato. I asked him, "Why read Plutarch on Cato when you can read Wells on Kato in the evening paper—not only read about Kato but see him in the flesh and in action; and not only see Kato in action but see Hughes, and Harding, and Root, and Balfour and the others." The play on words was not particularly robust; but I suspect an entirely reasonable argument could be made that these men were just as able and just as big in personality as any of the old Romans were. Certainly it is easily demonstrable that the affairs these modern men were

dealing with at the Washington Conference are decidedly more important than the affairs the old Romans managed. What the men who met every day in the Washington Conference were doing was on a vastly larger scale than anything the Romans ever had to do. It was on a larger scale in proportion as the civilized world of the present is larger than the civilized world of 1900 years ago. Not only is the scale larger by the degree in which the civilized world is larger—it is infinitely enlarged also by the fact that to-day so much more of the world is able to read and to follow public affairs with intelligence and conviction. It must have been comparatively easy for one of those old Romans to come to the front in that relatively small world of educated men. In the Roman world probably the number of persons who had an intelligent understanding of public affairs was not larger than a fairly small American town. For the rest, the Roman Empire consisted of a few millions of illiterate dependents and serfs. It must have been a very much easier process for a man of ambition and ability to push himself to the top of the world then, than it is for men like Harding and Hughes and Balfour and Briand and Kato to push themselves to the front of their respective nations. My conversation with Wells was jocular and took place in one of the friendly con-

tacts that were characteristic of the informal surroundings of the Conference. Nevertheless, I suspect that a reasonably serious thesis could be written on the theory that what was happening here before our eyes was about as large as most of the things that constitute the high peaks of history. Wells, the reporter, in the daily papers was not less important than Wells, the historian, in his "Outline of History." It ought to have been possible for the reader who has some imagination to get as much exaltation out of a two-cent evening paper as out of any of the volumes of Plutarch or Gibbon, assuming, of course, that the reporters of these present events have the ability to describe them adequately.)

V

The resolutions which Mr. Root proposed, and which were adopted by the Conference, read:

"It is the firm intention of the Powers attending this Conference hereinafter mentioned, to wit, the United States of America, Belgium, the British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, and Portugal—

"1. To respect the sovereignty, the independence and the territorial and administrative integrity of China.

"2. To provide the fullest and most unembarrassed opportunity to China to develop and maintain for herself an effective and stable government.

"3. To use their influence for the purpose of effectually establishing and maintaining the principle of equal opportunity for the commerce and industry of all nations throughout the territory of China.

"4. To refrain from taking advantage of the present conditions in order to seek special rights or privileges which would abridge the rights of the subjects or citizens of friendly states, and from countenancing action inimical to the security of such states."

It was evident that Mr. Hughes attached much weight to these resolutions. In presenting them to the Conference, he spoke of them as

"a charter containing an assurance to China of protection from acts in derogation of her sovereignty and independence and administrative autonomy, and also an assurance that as between the Powers there will be a careful observance of the principle of free and equal opportunity in matters relating to China and that no one will seek special advantages or privileges at the expense of the rights of others."

Later on, in his report to the President, Mr. Hughes described these resolutions, coupled with the other agreements made about the Far East as "constituting a Magna Charta for China."

VI

What I have said here about China, Japan and the Far East, undertakes to do little more

than express the reflections of an observer about the higher peaks of that portion of the Conference which dealt with those subjects. I have not tried to be complete about this, as I have tried to be as complete as possible about the negotiations to limit armament. The questions of the Far East were not an essential part of that great adventure. They, to a large extent, were a subject apart. In saying this I do not mean by implication to understate their importance. What the Conference did about China was in its way as unprecedented and constructive as the primary work of the Conference. These agreements and the negotiations that led up to them would make another book and would be worthy of it. But it would be a different book. The questions of the Far East were not a part of the original suggestion of the Conference, as that suggestion gathered its early momentum in the public opinion of the United States. They were introduced at a later stage of the progress of the idea. Their introduction was logical; but in any narrative of the heart of the great adventure, they have a position apart, and could only be covered adequately in another book. I have tried to treat them only in the proportion in which the present narrative demands; and I turn now to close with an effort to make clear that historic change, both in the way the world is to

be managed in the future and in the leadership of the new order, which took place in the moments when Hughes laid down his plan, and Balfour said, "We accept."

XI

"UNIQUE IN HISTORY"

IN THE opening chapter, I have quoted Mr. Balfour as describing that first day of the Washington Conference, and the speech Hughes made, as "that inspired moment . . . that fateful Saturday. . . ."

I want now to quote, and use as a text, another phrase, a phrase of three words, which Mr. Balfour picked to describe that same Saturday and the things the Conference accomplished as a result of it. Mr. Balfour said it was "unique in history."

Now "unique in history" is a broad phrase. It means literally that there was never anything else in history like it, that it stands alone. Further, Mr. Balfour is about as careful to be exact and literal in his choice of words as any other speaker or writer in the English-speaking world. Any one who has listened to him make a speech has noticed his habitual search for the exact word, the picking one and discarding it for another more precise. A man of Mr. Balfour's intellectual self-discipline doesn't use a phrase

like "unique in history" loosely. He doesn't throw it out, as many persons use such superlatives, merely as one way of saying a thing is very big or very great. When Mr. Balfour says the Washington Conference was "unique in history," he means just that.

Let us then try to see just what it was that this Conference did that was never done before. (Mr. Balfour, by the way, with his knowledge of the rise and fall of nations, and of the position that Great Britain has long held in the world, is probably as well equipped as any other man to see and comprehend just what was the thing that made the Washington Conference "unique in history.")

II

If you want to see the really big thing that happened at the Washington Conference, the thing that made it "unique in history"—you must stand away for a moment from all the confusing details of ships and tonnage and quarrels between the French and British. You must try, for a moment, to look upon the Washington Conference in its majestic perspective. You must go back a little and consider some things that happened to the nations of the world, and to their relations to each other, through the World War.

At all times there is a position in the world which is occupied by a dominant power. In a more restricted sense, the power holding this position is frequently spoken of as "mistress of the seas"—a phrase which is reasonably accurate, inasmuch as world dominance has practically always gone hand-in-hand with naval and commercial dominance on the sea. The phrase that Germany used for this position was the "place in the sun." It was that place that Germany sought to take from Great Britain; and it is Germany's lack of success and other incidents attending her effort, that threw us into all the dislocation of which the Washington Conference was an attempt at readjustment on the basis of a new order.

Germany was insane—the word is not too strong—with jealousy of Britain's place in the sun. Germany wanted it for herself. She willed that Great Britain should lose it. She worked for forty years, worked with tireless energy and consummate ingenuity, to take it away through the arts of business and commerce. And so long as she kept her effort within the field of commerce and the spontaneous spread of certain ideas she had about the organization of society, such as education, the care of dependents and the like—so long as she confined her ambition to those legitimate channels, she was

in a fair way to reach a large measure of success. Judged by the ordinary standards of commercial achievement, and the willing adoption by other peoples of many of her ideas, Germany seemed destined to win the long race and the high place.

But at last Germany's envy carried her out of the world of sanity, and she took up the sword. She made a historic commotion in the world; and as the clouds cleared away from the débris, several results appeared as having come about, or as being in a way to come about. But success for Germany's ambition to seize the place in the sun was not among them. Great Britain, it is true, was seriously undermined in her possession of it, but Germany had not got it. It had begun to tend to go where the prize that envy contends for often goes, to one who was in the beginning a disinterested bystander. And out of that situation arose the thing that made the Washington Conference unparalleled in history.

III

This thing that Germany lusted for, this place in the sun that Great Britain had and Germany wanted, is only partially described by the phrase, "mistress of the seas." Any one who has read Admiral Mahan's "Influence of Sea-Power upon History" knows that whoever is mistress

of the seas is also something more. With command of the seas goes world dominance. To express it in a pardonable bull, whoever is mistress of the seas is also cock of the walk. That is the position which Great Britain had and which Germany coveted.

It is a striking position in the world. The mere thought of it calls up a long and colourful pageant of empires and dynasties. Its history has been eloquently portrayed in a chapter of "The Heritage of Tyre," by Mr. William Brown Meloney, which chapter I have condensed and paraphrased, and at some points expanded a little—without, I hope, too much mutilation of the essential meaning—in the following passage:

Since the day that man first straddled a floating log and started humanity adventuring by sea, the intervening centuries have seen only seven nations possessed of sufficient genius to dominate the earth's deep waters. During two thousand two hundred and forty-eight years, Tyre has had but seven true heirs. Tyre, in her time, was the inspiration of all commerce. Irrespective of nationality, all who trafficked by sea were called "merchants of Tyre," and all vessels of burden "ships of Tyre." Dynasties lived by grace of Tyre's credit, and died at the calling of her loans. With the passing of Tyre the position went to Carthage; after Carthage to the Italian cities, Venice, Genoa, Florence and Naples. Italy held her dominance for seven hundred years, until the Hanseatic League of Cities took the leadership of commerce to the

Baltic Sea. Then Portugal forced herself to the front. That was preceding the discovery of America by Spain. With the aggressiveness of which that discovery was characteristic, Spain took the leadership away from Portugal. Spain held it two hundred years and lost it to Holland. But hardly had Holland won control than a new heir arose —an heir that would not be gainsaid; that would not be content with a division—an heir that must have all and took it. That was England.

Great Britain, as the seventh inheritor in all history, has held this "Heritage of Tyre" for nearly two hundred and fifty years.[1] And the thing that happened on that fateful Saturday, the one act of the Washington Conference that made it unique in history, was that Great Britain gave this possession up—gave it up, not through war or battle, but through processes of peace; not as an act of surrender but as one of deliberate self-denial; not resentfully to a victorious enemy, but willingly to friends and equals. What Great Britain did may be described, by a not unreasonable analogy, as turning her naval leadership over to a board of trustees, to a group of partners, among whom she herself is one of the senior partners with five shares, the other senior partner being America with five shares also; and

1 I am not attempting to be minutely exact. There was a time during this interval when France disputed Great Britain's naval power; and another comparatively brief period, about the middle of the last century, when the United States approximated Great Britain in mercantile shipping.

Japan being a junior partner with three shares. It is in this partnership that naval dominance is now lodged, and it is this voluntary turning over by a great nation, acting in the interest of a new order and a new spirit of coöperation in the world, of a position, a power, and a possession which she has held by force of superior arms for more than two hundred years—it was this that made the Washington Conference unique in history.[1]

IV

Let us analyze this position of dominance,[2] and see what it is composed of. Those who have not thought deeply into it assume that it consists merely in the possession of the strongest navy in the world. It is true that the possession of the strongest navy is the keystone of the position of world dominance; and that is why the Washington Conference, seen in its true perspec-

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1 I would not have the reader understand me as intending to imply that it was Great Britain who made the only renunciation at the Washington Conference. America, too, made a renunciation. If Great Britain renounced a possession, we renounced an ambition, which we had the resources to achieve. As Colonel Repington expressed it, "The [Hughes] plan, however drastic, seems fair and sincere, and America is offering to scrap ships upon which she has spent $330,000,000 already. . . . Teaching by example, America makes a great renunciation and the most magnificent political gesture of all history."

2 It was, of course, naval dominance alone that was dealt with at the Washington Conference. I have used the word "dominance" loosely. Naval dominance practically always goes with dominance in mercantile shipping; and the two in combination compose dominance on the sea.

tive, was a move that went to the heart of immense events.

But to treat adequately of the Washington Conference it is necessary to go deeper. There is a pregnant sentence in Admiral Mahan's "Influence of Sea-Power upon History;" "The necessity of a navy . . . springs . . . from the existence of a peaceful shipping, and disappears with it."

The greatest navy in the world, in other words, is an essential part, but not the whole, of world dominance. The other parts of world dominance are mercantile shipping and the commerce and finance which go with mercantile shipping. The great navy is the pistol that defends that treasure. The three things stand together. World dominance consists of a combination of: supremacy in finance, supremacy in mercantile shipping, and supremacy in armed shipping.

These three go together. They cannot ordinarily exist apart. Whatever nation has them is mistress of the seas, is dominant on the land, has that exalted place in the sun which Germany coveted, fought for, and lost everything for.

These three things in August, 1914, Great Britain had, and had had in one degree or another for more than two hundred years. But

through the operations of the World War, she was undermined in each.

With the beginning of the war, and forced to it by the necessities of war, Great Britain called in her money from all over the world. Within a year she ceased to be the greatest lender of money in the world. She reversed her position and became a borrower, chiefly from America. Before the war was much more than a year old, Great Britain's leadership in finance had measurably passed to the United States. Preceding the war we had been deeply in debt to Great Britain, as, indeed, was nearly every other nation in the world. Before the war we owed the investors of Great Britain upward of five billion dollars, and used to pay her upward of two hundred millions a year in interest. Since the war, Great Britain owes us, in public and private obligations, upward of $3,000,000,000. It is a sufficient summary of what happened to Great Britain's position in world finance to say that before the war she was the greatest creditor nation in the world, and since the war the United States is; Great Britain was the greatest exporter of capital in the world, and now America is.

As to mercantile shipping, before the war Great Britain was clearly and unmistakably first among the nations. She had almost as many

ships as all the rest of the world put together. Of a world's total of about fifty million tons, Great Britain had over twenty. These mercantile ships were the keystone of her commercial and financial arch. They were the cornerstone of her economic leadership. Shipping was England's master business, the backbone of all her resources. Shipping was to England what our wheat crop is to us, or our cotton crop, or our copper output. More accurately, shipping was to Great Britain what all these combined, and more besides, were and are to us. With us, shipping was a negligible industry. We had less than 10 per cent. of the world's mercantile ships.

But here again, from the very beginning of the war, Great Britain's supremacy in mercantile shipping began to be undermined. In the first place, the building of new ships was practically stopped. England could not spare the man-power. She needed all her men for her army. Such man-power as she could spare for shipbuilding at all was devoted to warships. With her mercantile shipbuilding interrupted, the annual wastage through wear and tear mounted up on her at the rate of more than a million tons a year. But worse, infinitely worse, than the ordinary wastage, was the devastation wrought by the German submarine. Germany, with a true and intelligent instinct for the exact

thing she was after, began to sink Britain's ships faster than Britain could renew them. Britain came upon a sinister moment when she was about to lose the war and lose her historic position on the sea through the destruction wrought by the German submarine.[1] In this situation, Great Britain begged us to build ships, begged us to turn all our resources to the building of vessels to replace her losses.

In the urgency of this request, America began to build not ships at first, but shipbuilding plants. In the course of the war we set up in America an aggregate of mercantile shipbuilding plants much greater than Great Britain's capacity. When the war ended, we were in a position and had the necessary plant for building such a quantity of ships as would make us far the superior of Great Britain in the ownership of mercantile vessels. We might or might not use this shipbuilding plant to capacity. We might or might not stride ahead into the position which

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1 There is an interesting reference to this in one of the speeches Mr. Balfour made at the Washington Conference. In his passionate demand that France permit the utter abolition of submarines he recalled "the critical moments of the war. It was in the beginning of 1917 when I was coming over to this country and during the earlier part of my stay here. During those weeks undoubtedly we had only to add up the tonnage of destruction and subtract it from the tonnage of the world to see that if things went on as they were going on the war could have but one end. Yes, it was a struggle, you will remember, between the attacking forces of the submarine and the defensive forces that were brought against it. Like all these struggles between offense and defense, it had its oscillations. That was the very Nadir of our fortunes."

was easily open to us, of being the greatest owner of mercantile ships in the world.[1]

As regards armed ships, as regards naval power, Great Britain, at the end of the war, still held her dominance. Through the necessities of war she had largely increased her navy. We had not built any considerable number of warships while the war was on, but about the time it ended, here, too, we began a programme of greatly stimulated building. By the time the war was three years over, by the third anniversary of the Armistice, which was also the opening day of the Washington Conference, we were in a position where our navy approximated Great Britain's.

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This, then, was the situation as between Great Britain and the United States at the time the

1 Great Britain saw this menace to her mercantile shipping supremacy with clear apprehension. The head of the Chamber of Shipping of the United Kingdom said at the time, "We, the greatest shipbuilding nation that the world has ever seen, have now been far outstripped by the Americans. . . . It is a source of grave concern." About the same time a correspondent of the London *Morning Post* declared that "an ally of to-day may become a trade-rival after the war," to which the *Morning Post* editor added, "Public opinion in Great Britain is not alive to the peril which threatens us." Lord Inchcape said, "I am afraid of what the position may be when the war is over."

From the American point of view, the possibilities were seen with equal clearness. In the latter part of 1918, Mr. Hurley, then head of our Shipping Board, said: "The American Merchant Marine is to-day expanding more rapidly than any other in the world. In August of this year the United States took rank as the leading shipbuilding nation in the world. It has now more shipyards, more shipways, more ship workers, more ships under construction, and is building more ships every month, than any other country, not excepting Great Britain, hitherto easily the first shipbuilding power."

Conference opened.[1] Dominance on the sea and all that goes with it was divided, so to speak, between the United States and Great Britain. We were at the point where we could keep financial dominance; at the point where we could go ahead, if we chose to, and achieve mercantile shipping dominance; and at the point where, if we cared to use all our resources, we could probably greatly exceed Great Britain's naval strength. The position of world dominance was at a point where it might either swing back to Great Britain, or continue to come toward us. Under ordinary circumstances, Great Britain would be eager to renew her grip upon it, to get it back securely into her possession. We, on our part, had no crystallized determination about it. We were not self-conscious about it. The forces that rule such matters, natural resources, relative wealth, the tides of economic tendency, all seemed to work toward us. But these forces were not supplemented by any deliberate effort on our part. Our national pride, our ambition, had not been deeply stirred. To very few of our people did world dominance, as such, appeal. To many of them, so far as it was understood,

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1 Even before the war, it was apparent to some men of long outlook that this passing of supremacy to America might ultimately take place. A suggestion to this effect is to be seen in the recently published letters of the late Walter H. Page, then Ambassador of Great Britain. But a process which in peace would have extended over generations was by war compressed into a few years.

its responsibilities were a little repugnant. The beginning of the change had not been initiated by us. We had not sought the prize. The possession of it by another had not excited our cupidity. Indeed, so far as we thought about it at all, we were a little reluctant to be the beneficiary of one of the results of a war in which our losing competitor was our ally in that war. It was a little repugnant to us to make ourselves the beneficiary of a position of which our ally would have been the loser because of her sacrifice made in a common cause. It is true, the appeal had been made to our people by many of our leaders to take the prize that destiny held out to us. One group of leaders had urged us to go ahead and make ourselves the world's greatest shipping nation; other leaders had proclaimed the policy, and started us upon it, of becoming the greatest naval power in the world. But many among us were dubious about the desirability of becoming the greatest shipping nation, with all the cost it would entail. And to the project of our building the dominant navy there was outspoken and organized opposition.

Nevertheless, the fact of dominance being in unstable equilibrium, drifting between two nations with the temptation of each to go after it, was a danger. It was not natural and could not

last. It was a situation which throughout all history has led to war. Ordinarily, the usual course is for the competition to become more and more acute, and go on headlong to the final test of arms. In similar situations in history, this has been the outcome. Possibly, even without the Washington Conference, this might not have happened. Conceivably, we might have been permitted to take the prize without a war. But that would be without parallel. Under similar circumstances, never in history has a nation possessing dominance on the sea let it pass away from her willingly, never without putting the last ounce of her strength into the effort to keep her hold.

That was the condition on the day the Washington Conference met. That had been the situation as between the United States and Great Britain ever since the war ended.

Great Britain might have acted on the instinct of pride; might have accepted the lesson of history; might have bent her back into keeping her mercantile shipping position and maintaining her supremacy of armed sea-power. We, on our part, might have thrown our resources into building the greatest mercantile fleet in the world and into achieving the supremacy of armed sea-power that goes with the possession of mercantile shipping leadership. We

could have won the race, if it had been made a race.[1]

But this race, with all its sinister implications and omens, was ended and put aside by the Washington Conference. In the Washington Conference, Great Britain and America said in effect: "We will not fight for this prize. We will not enter into a competition of armed power. We will keep our navies equal. We will let the economic supremacy be a matter of ordinary competition in trade. We will let it go in peace to whichever competitor shows the greater deserving in commercial ingenuity and the most intelligent and effective utilization of resources. As to our arms, we will agree to reduce them to the basis of the ordinary necessities of defense; thereafter we will keep them equal, and we promise not to draw them against each other."

In this act, Great Britain surrendered actual dominance of naval power and we surrendered potential dominance. Great Britain gave up the heritage she had held for more than two hundred years; and we gave up the ambition to take it from her for ourselves. It was, as I

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1 At a time when it seemed that a competitive race might come; at a time before the Conference was held and when it was uncertain whether the other nations would accept our invitations, or whether the Conference would be successful, one of our younger and more ardent naval officials, in a metaphor borrowed from the vocabulary of the navy, said: "All right; if it's to be a race, then 'three bells and a jingle; full steam ahead, and see who goes broke first.' "

have said, in a sense placed in a partnership to be administered for the common good.

It was this peaceful passing of naval dominance, or, to express it more accurately, this turning over of dominance to, so to speak, a board of trustees, making it no longer a prize of selfishness to be contended for by jealous nations, but rather a coöperative responsibility to be administered jointly, that made the Washington Conference "unique in history."

THE END

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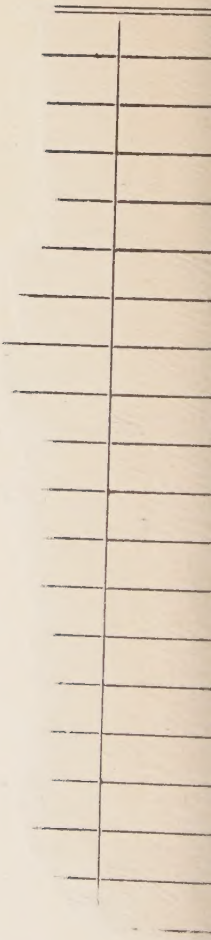

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